AUGUSTINE *for the* Philosophers

The Rhetor of Hippo, the *Confessions*, and the Continentals

CALVIN L. TROUP
editor

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In memory of

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Preface

Calvin L. Troup

Saint Augustine is an original thinker and contributor to rhetoric and philosophy of communication.[1] Nevertheless, even after the resurgence of rhetorical studies in the past century—particularly in the second half of the past century—Augustine's contributions remain mostly uncharted. This book is part of a larger project dedicated to rehabilitating Augustine and bringing to light the pertinence of his work in rhetoric and philosophy of communication today. As the authors in this volume demonstrate, we need to reacquaint ourselves with Augustine's work to recover our own intellectual heritage and to recognize his potential as a catalyst for contemporary thought. Taken seriously, Augustine is a faithful provocateur capable of generating fruitful intellectual energy, often in unexpected directions.[2] To engage Augustine's work seriously is not to "read the text" naïvely; each chapter in this book demonstrates the scholarly challenges involved in working with Augustine. For example, the continental thinkers who appear in this volume—Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Albert Camus, Paul Ricoeur, Jacques Ellul, and Jean-François Lyotard—all depart in significant ways from the conventions of modern scholarship on Augustine to benefit from his work. If we can hear how they engage Augustine, we may gain insight into their work and learn new ways we might read Augustine with greater expectations for our own intellectual growth.

Augustine's contributions emerge along coordinates and within categories not widely anticipated by modern scholars. Within conventional histories of rhetoric in the twentieth century, Augustine ordinarily plays a summary role as "Christianizer" of antique rhetoric. His ecclesiastical authority secures the survival of rhetorical studies through the Middle Ages.

But his contributions tend to be viewed as modest, limited to religious rhetoric alone.[3] The field reflects a commonplace modern assertion concerning Augustine: that he was ill equipped intellectually and is irrelevant to contemporary scholars because of a narrow Christian orthodoxy palatable only to the medieval world. This mind-set follows modern Augustinian scholarship, which reduced discussion of the Confessions in the last century almost exclusively to questions within Neoplatonism.[4] The reduction offers one categorical, generic interpretation of Augustine and raises it to the level of exclusive scholarly authority.[5] Scholars who follow the authoritative treatment of Augustine deny any original ideas in his work or dismiss his unprecedented ideas as accidental: he could not have known what he was doing, they say, or he was shamelessly Christianizing pagan thinkers who preceded him, or his ideas were small-minded and intended for only narrowly religious purposes.[6] Consequently, summaries of the tradition in rhetoric and philosophy of communication tend to situate Augustine according to assumptions that discount him as an enigmatic, Christian Neoplatonist.[7]

However, some Augustinian scholars have purposed to study his texts closely within his own context and have abandoned the assumptions, the terms, and the esoterica of the Neoplatonic debate. They argue, for example, that the dominant vein of scholarship has abandoned almost entirely the text of the *Confessions*, reaching conclusions unsustainable under textual scrutiny.[8] Highly respected commentaries on the *Confessions* by James J. O'Donnell and Colin Starnes each set aside the dominant dispute on Neoplatonism and open the text with expansive scholarly rigor, as does Ann Hartle's philosophical reading of the *Confessions*.[9] Renowned Augustine biographer Peter Brown *contrasts* Augustine's mind-set with Neoplatonism, suggesting that Neoplatonists, following Porphyry, were always working within a tight, closed system, whereas Augustine's work proceeds in an open, nonsystematic framework.[10] Among scholars of rhetoric and philosophy of communication who have worked closely with Augustine's texts, similar themes emerge. W. R. Johnson pronounces Augustine a Ciceronian at heart and in practice, not a Platonist.[11] And James J. Murphy invites us to think of Augustine as a robust alternative to both the "sophistic heresy" and the "platonic heresy" within rhetoric and philosophy of communication.[12] These scholars open the way for us to consider alternative readings of Augustine that engage his work along coordinates that parallel existentialism, phenomenology, and hermeneutics as these approaches appear in twentieth-century continental thought; Augustine's parallel coordinates emerge from his incarnational commitments in concert with his rhetorical and philosophical sensibilities.[13]

Recent communication scholars like James Farrell and Dave Tell have utilized these openings to engage the text of the *Confessions* hermeneutically to provoke serious reconsideration of Augustine's work.[14]

Augustine's direct intellectual impact in rhetoric and philosophy of communication may be more pronounced today than in many prior centuries. Interestingly, his presence in postmodern intellectual conversation does not come from religionists, theologians, or Augustinian specialists but from formative continental thinkers, all of whom have contributed significantly to the twentieth century's turn toward rhetoric and philosophy of communication. Each of the continental thinkers considered in this volume has engaged Augustine in the formulation and reformulation of his or her ideas; some have devoted an entire book to the task. For example, both the *Confession of Saint Augustine* by Jean-François Lyotard (published posthumously in 2000) and Jacques Derrida's "Circumfession," published in *Jacques Derrida* by Geoffrey Bennington, signal a pattern of sustained inquiry by continental philosophers. In *Augustine and Postmodernism: Confessions and Circumfession*, John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon document just how seriously many such scholars take Augustine's work.[15] Many Augustinian texts come into play—sermons, scripture commentaries, theological and philosophical treatises—but the focal point is the *Confessions*. What merits sustained intellectual attention to the text by scholars of rhetoric and philosophy nearly 1,600 years after Augustine's death?

Although research in rhetoric and philosophy of communication relies heavily on the continental intellectual tradition, Augustine's associations with recent continental thought have not been explored directly in the field. This volume offers essays on rhetoric and philosophy of communication by scholars well versed in the work of the continental theorists noted above. Each essay explicates a substantial conversation between one continental thinker and Augustine on present issues in rhetoric and philosophy of communication, including intersections and interruptions that emerge from the conversations. The chapters address basic questions: What is the intellectual significance and contribution of the continental scholar to whom the chapter is dedicated? That is, what text by the contemporary scholar is under consideration? Furthermore, what are the connections to Augustine and how does the scholar engage Augustine's work? And finally, how does the engagement between the scholar and Augustine contribute to the rhetoric and philosophy of communication?

Augustine's *Confessions*, completed in 397, is the gateway through which the continental philosophers enter Augustine's work. The thinkers under

consideration reference other Augustinian texts—*On Christian Doctrine, On the Trinity, On the Teacher, City of God*, and so on—but most begin with the Confessions. In chapter 1, I acquaint readers with relationships between existential phenomenology, hermeneutics, and rhetoric as constituted within the field of rhetoric and philosophy of communication. The intellectual development of these relationships emerges in scholars' conversation with Augustine, from Husserl and Heidegger through Ricoeur and Lyotard, focusing predominantly on *Confessions* books 10 (on memory) and 11 (on time and eternity). Through direct references in the work of continental scholars, I document a few common entry points for engagement and then foreground the importance of the incarnation to Augustine's ideas. Incarnation is prominent in the Confessions and opens Augustine to an explicitly existential view of temporality and contingency, to phenomenological thought, and, therefore, to hermeneutics and rhetoric. The introductory chapter points to where and why Augustine is a valued interlocutor on questions rhetorical and philosophical in twentieth-century continental thought.

Martin Heidegger dedicated the first half of *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, based on lectures in 1920–1921 on the subject, to direct consideration of Augustine's *Confessions*. In the second chapter, Michael J. Hyde explores the openings that Heidegger finds in Augustine concerning the phenomenological practice of acknowledgment. Hyde turns our attention toward the practice of rhetoric, which both Heidegger and Augustine believe is necessary to serve truth toward the good, particularly in public. For Hyde, Augustine serves as a case study on acknowledgment for Heidegger. The chapter explores assumptions concerning ethical responsibility and human freedom exercised through resolute choice in the face of present uncertainty. Notwithstanding the obvious metaphysical distinctions between Augustine and Heidegger, Hyde notes momentous phenomenological commonplaces upon which they mutually rely. Both find themselves thrown into a world with preconscious ethical and moral valences that require the practical art of rhetoric to achieve authentic temporal dwelling. Understood from this vantage point, Augustine provides contra-Cartesian intuition and sensibilities manifested through constructive hermeneutics and rhetoric. As Hyde explains, we human beings rely on hermeneutics and rhetoric to navigate our earthly, temporal, pragmatic dwelling. We come to know this dwelling best through personal crises that disrupt our everyday way of being and that open us to *Being* in Heidegger, to *God* in Augustine, and to care in our acknowledgment of the persons with whom we all dwell.

Hannah Arendt wrote her dissertation, *Love and Saint Augustine*, in 1929, prior to her departure from Nazi Germany to the United States. Ronald C. Arnett provides a thoughtful opening into Arendt's hermeneutic encounters with Augustine in this collection's third chapter. Augustine engages the chaotic world of the late Roman Empire and dies during a Germanic siege of his hometown of Hippo in 430.[16] Fifteen hundred years later, as another chaotic terror, that of Hitler's Third Reich, emerges in Germany, Arendt finds herself reading Augustine closely. His hermeneutic and existential sensibilities enlarge Arendt's critique of modernity, including her understanding of desire, will, and response as a derivative self-guided by *caritas*—appropriate love. She calls Augustine the first "existentialist." In the chapter, Arnett considers Augustine a kindred spirit to Arendt, who reads the *Confessions* as a conversation through which one can learn to practice the existential distance necessary to love one's neighbor. Arendt asks Augustine's question: "What happens when one becomes a question to oneself?" In response, she embraces the recalcitrance and interruptions of existence in hermeneutic conversation, invites us to call our own selves into question, and urges us to take human will and responsibility seriously. As Arnett explains, Arendt meets in Augustine a philosophically robust existentialism that resists the existential arrogance of modernity and opens alternatives for thoughtfulness in human communication.

Jean-François Lyotard writes *The Confession of Saint Augustine* in the twilight of his days, a work not finished but appropriately published posthumously in 2000 as a final personal and scholarly contribution. David J. Depew considers Lyotard's explication of the *Confessions* as a fitting culmination of Lyotard's life's work. To develop the philosophical appeal and phenomenological impact of Augustine for Lyotard demands careful consideration and intellectual qualification, given Lyotard's status as a leading secular intellectual of the left. Beginning with Descartes, this fourth chapter provides a narrative account of the continental tradition from Husserl and Heidegger through Levinas and Derrida that frames Lyotard's philosophical critique of substantialism. Augustine plays an ongoing role in the substantialist tradition. However, many traditional readings of the *Confessions*—philosophical, theological, and devotional—miss the radical implications of the way the text treats the temporal structure of subjectivity. Depew opens *The Confession of Saint Augustine* by Lyotard, showing his engagement with Augustine apart from Christian and Neoplatonic metaphysics, apart from the idea of eternity, and apart from traditional receptions of the text. What emerges is a gripping phenomenological account of the *distentio animi*—the structure

of internal time consciousness and the utter human inability to overcome temptation. Lyotard regards Augustine as taking seriously the power of desire and presents consciousness in the future anterior tense, which accentuates the remorse and regret associated with inordinate desire. Issues of time further involve the philosophical debate between substance ontologies and event ontologies. Lyotard places Augustine distinctly in the province of event ontologies, providing helpful connections between phenomenology and rhetoric. Lyotard's consideration of Augustine further establishes the importance of rhetoric for both thinkers since phenomenology—event driven, not substance driven—reinforces contingency as the human condition.

Albert Camus, like Arendt, engages Augustine first in his 1936 dissertation, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, in which he sees in Augustine the paramount attempt at synthesizing Christian orthodoxy with Hellenistic thought. In chapter 5, Ramsey Eric Ramsey consults a later work of Camus—a speech entitled "The Unbeliever and Christians"—in which, by invoking Augustine, Camus issues a hopeful call for solidarity between a group of Christian believers and him, an unbeliever, on a deep question of justice: children were undergoing torture. From this call, Ramsey Eric Ramsey turns what might seem a modern encounter between Camus and Augustine toward a postsecular recovery, reformation, and transformation of their relationship through hermeneutics and rhetoric. Camus stands at the crossroads of Greek coherence and Christian anxiety with Augustine but without Augustine's God and without eternal Truth. Ramsey argues that neither Camus nor Augustine belong within the linearity of modern thought and, therefore, moves them into an alternative age of interpretation. Considered from a standpoint of dynamic equivalence among rhetoric, philosophy, and theology, Augustine and Camus affirm a common need for courage to love in the face of evil, a courage that grows out of a ceaseless care for people and words. In these two Algerians, Ramsey finds proximity in practices of charitable hermeneutics, dialogue, and cobelligerency against temporal evil. He invites us to consider Camus' engagement with Augustine—from Camus' dissertation to *The Rebel*—seeing in that engagement a hermeneutic perspective sufficient to reclaim their religious and aesthetic contributions for our own day without recourse to modern objectivism or onto-theological metaphysics.

Hans-Georg Gadamer engages Augustine substantially in *Truth and Method* in 1960 and later in *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*. In chapter 6, John Arthos translates Gadamer's introduction to his *Philosophisches Lesebuch*, making it available for the first time in English. The introduction points to Gadamer's adoption of Augustine's Trinitarian philosophy

of language that expands the hermeneutic circle and adds rhetorical entry points into that inevitable circle. Arthos' reading shows how Augustine escapes various forms of dualism and reverses Plato's correspondence theory of truth. The incarnational Christology in Augustine manifests a constitutive philosophy of human language that mirrors the Trinity, presenting an inwardness that engages the phenomenal world with a dynamic of immanence and transcendence. Gadamer finds a viable philosophical alternative to essentialism and nominalism in Augustine, who reconciles the paradoxes of the incarnation and the Trinity through *logos*, a seamless linguistic weaving of thought and speech. The linkage of exterior (material) and interior (immaterial) helps Gadamer to advance hermeneutic work on discursive identity, relying on Augustine's sensibilities concerning processive identity, namely the distentio animi that situates temporal human identity "in the in between."

Edmund Husserl's *Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness,* first written in 1905, makes immediate, direct reference to Augustine's *Confessions*. In chapter 7, Algis Mickūnas engages the problem of subjectivity in continental thought through an interpretation of Husserl's analysis. Augustine's meditations on time and eternity set the stage for Husserl's inquiry, yet Augustine's aporias on time include an assumption about being that Husserl will not admit philosophically. Mickūnas details precisely how Husserl moves from Augustine's account of being and time toward an account of time consciousness without reference to being—his phenomenology of time consciousness. As Mickūnas notes, both Husserl and Augustine recognize that phenomenological inquiry into temporality forces the issue of subjectivity along the lines of being, permanence, transcendence, change, and transition. Dealing with the essence and location of time intensifies the problem of continuity and identity of the self. Taken together, the philosophical explorations of Augustine and Husserl indicate that continuity and self-identity are ideas that cannot be easily dismissed. As Mickūnas suggests, both philosophers accomplish their inquiries in ways that elude contemporary continental critiques of continuity and self-identity.

Paul Ricoeur devotes much of the first volume of *Time and Narrative,* first published in 1983, to Augustine. He bases his narrative theory in Time and Narrative on the relationship between hermeneutics and human experience manifested in narrative emplotment. In chapter 8 of this collection, Andreea Deciu Ritivoi explicates Augustine's inspirational role in Ricoeur's reflections on time—reflections that propel his idea of threefold mimesis. Her insights include careful transliterations of Augustine's work by Ricoeur, including how Ricoeur brackets eternity and suggests theoretical limits

to Augustine's philosophy/psychology of time. Nevertheless, Ricoeur finds Augustine indispensable. Ritivoi observes that by juxtaposing work on time in the *Confessions* with Aristotle's *Poetics* and Heidegger's phenomenology of time, Ricoeur articulates a philosophy of language and theory of narrative that gives primacy to orality—the essential, temporal unity of human speech and language. By foregrounding time and rhetoric, Augustine helps Ricoeur to build a philosophy of language adequate to bridge reflective thought and human experience.

Jacques Ellul, like Arendt and Camus, finds coordinates in Augustine to guide his 1932 dissertation and permeate his ongoing work from *The Presence of the Kingdom* through *The Humiliation of the Word*. In the final chapter of this collection, Clifford G. Christians joins Calvin L. Troup to trace an intellectual genealogy that links Ellul and Augustine at the ground of their work. Ellul's basic commitments echo Augustine through an elaborate network of connections. He employs Augustinian assumptions to critique structural semiotic theories, particularly in their dismissal of common sense, the spoken word, and the essential embodiment of meaningful human communication. This chapter works from Ellul's philosophy of language and its deep phenomenological resonances toward a philosophy of communication, or metarhetoric, that gives priority to faithfulness situated in incarnate, human practices. Christians and Troup explicate this relationship as a philosophy of communication dedicated to aletheiac truth—a kairotic formulation of hermeneutic responsiveness and rhetorical proclamation.

Continental philosophers who have contributed significantly to philosophy of communication and the rhetorical turn in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries engage Augustine in the formulation and reformulation of their ideas. And although this pattern has been going on for some time, research in rhetoric and philosophy of communication in the United States that derives from this continental intellectual tradition seems to have largely missed this pivotal genealogical and philosophical connection. Augustine dwells as a nexus of continental thought at formative moments of postmodern philosophy and theory, raising intriguing questions concerning the prospects for continuing intellectual contributions stemming from his thought. The interpretive essays in this volume introduce instances of these intellectual conversations with Augustine and trace an intellectual genealogy of rhetoric and philosophy of communication, with Augustine at the root of many intellectual family trees. Together, these conversations invite readers to consider the present heuristic value of Augustine today.

Acknowledgments

Never argue for the supposed influence of one thinker upon another, my advisor warned me when I was a young scholar. It was good advice that provoked not a few initial misgivings about this project; that is, until I read the texts of the continental philosophers considered in this volume. The thorough, direct engagement of Augustine by twentieth-century continental thinkers is remarkable, each one of these thinkers formative in postmodern rhetoric and philosophy of communication. But seven lifetimes would be insufficient to inquire adequately into the deluge of questions that immediately ensued. Thankfully, my good colleagues allowed me to prevail upon them to do what I was not capable of doing on my own. I am forever grateful to the contributors to this volume—Ron Arnett, John Arthos, Cliff Christians, David Depew, Michael Hyde, Algis Mickūnas, Ramsey Eric Ramsey, and Andreea Ritivoi—for the splendid scholarship that has brought this project to fruition. Some others might have been rightly included in the study. But, mercifully, scholarly projects are by necessity limited in scope, and the best ones only encourage better scholarship. Perhaps the reading and making of better books is not pure vanity.

Everything good and true in this volume has emerged from working communities of diligent people. Special thanks go to Ashley Steckel, Joshua Hill, and Steven Zwier, particularly for their perseverance, without whom the manuscript would never have seen final form. Thanks also to Jordan Rowan Fannin at Baylor University Press for her editorial assistance and to Martin Medhurst and Carey Newman at the press for their patience through the project's germination and completion. I take sole responsibility for any errors or omissions that may detract from the book's quality.

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1

The *Confessions* and the Continentals

Calvin L. Troup

Saint Augustine, fifth-century bishop of Hippo Regius in Roman North Africa, sanctions the resurgence of rhetoric and philosophy of communication that began in the mid-twentieth century. He is an intellectual catalyst for many continental philosophers whose ideas have been formative in contemporary rhetoric and philosophy of communication, yet many working scholars remain unacquainted with Saint Augustine's contributions. His significance within ancient and medieval traditions has been well documented and remains undiminished, but his work also intersects with current thought in ways many scholars might not anticipate.[1] The question is, though, *What has led continental philosophers to engage Augustine deeply and directly on questions in rhetoric and philosophy of communication?* In response, this volume invites readers to consider Augustine as a fulcrum for continental thought. The contributing authors are scholars fluent in the work of a cast of important continental philosophers: Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Jean-François Lyotard, Hannah Arendt, Albert Camus, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Paul Ricoeur, and Jacques Ellul. Each chapter explicates the substantial conversations between one of these thinkers and Augustine on issues in rhetoric and philosophy of communication. The chapters point to the many ways that Augustine can strengthen our grasp of continental thought and, taken together, commend further explorations of his rhetoric and philosophy of communication.

At least since Edmund Husserl, continental scholars have engaged the work of Augustine in the formulation and reformulation of their ideas related to rhetoric and philosophy of communication, but until quite recently, Augustine's role in continental thought was not well known.

Then two major figures in continental philosophy devoted late works to Augustine. Jacques Derrida wrote an extensive essay, "Circumfession," published in *Jacques Derrida* by Geoffrey Bennington in 1993, and Jean-François Lyotard wrote *Confession of Saint Augustine*, published posthumously in 2000. These texts signaled what we now recognize as a long-standing pattern of engagement. In 2005, John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon published *Augustine and Postmodernism: Confessions and Circumfession*, which explored some of the philosophical implications of these relationships.

Of particular interest to scholars of communication and religion, Augustine's most compelling intellectual work is informed by his pervasive religious presuppositions. Although some modern scholars have tried to ignore Augustine's Christian intellectual commitments to extract secularized concepts from his work, the continental philosophers considered here were prone to admit Augustine's Christian intellectual ground at least in part and engage him directly on questions of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and rhetoric, rather than to dismiss or ignore the Christian dimensions embedded in his ideas.[2] Therefore, at the nexus of continental philosophy and theory in formative postmodern moments, Augustine invites intriguing questions concerning intellectual contributions from religious grounds today. In this chapter, I first explain the relationship between rhetoric and hermeneutics, with special attention to the influence of existential phenomenology. Second, I introduce benchmarks in Augustine's *Confessions* that provide entry points for continental scholars working from existential, phenomenological, and rhetorical grounds. Third, I discuss important interpretive assumptions employed by continental thinkers that make engagement with Augustine's philosophically plausible. The chapter concludes by considering openings for further inquiry with Augustine, followed by brief summaries of the chapters in the volume.

EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGY, HERMENEUTICS, AND RHETORIC

The relationship between rhetoric and hermeneutics is a prime point of contact between continental thought and Augustine. Hermeneutic scholars regard Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine* as the field's founding text, launching both biblical and philosophical hermeneutics.[3] While Augustine's hermeneutic theory resides primarily in books 1–3, rhetorical scholars tend to focus on book 4, which is typically read as a "Christianization" of Cicero, and ignore the first three books.[4] Augustine himself regards the four books

as a coherent whole, comprehending speaking performances that unite hermeneutics and rhetoric, wisdom and eloquence, in practice. That previous scholars have missed this connection reflects a broader, ongoing inattentiveness to the relationship between hermeneutics and rhetoric. As Michael Hyde and Craig R. Smith note, "An important relationship existing between hermeneutics and rhetoric has been overlooked by communication scholars," with significant implications for the specifically epistemological functions of rhetoric and for rhetorical theory and criticism generally.[5]

Hyde and Smith suggest that to disclose the relationship between hermeneutics and rhetoric requires phenomenological inquiry, and they argue that all knowledge we acquire "is contextual, a product of the hermeneutical situation and therefore founded in rhetoric—the making-known of primordial interpretive understanding."[6] Although phenomenologists work across the grain of fixed methods, set techniques, and strict definitions, the phenomenological iterations and intuitions that inform this study hearken back to Husserl's early call to return "to the things themselves."[7] Calvin O. Schrag explains common coordinates for inquiry within the broader tradition of existential phenomenology, from Husserl to Heidegger and through their intellectual descendants:

> Philosophical analysis, description, and reflection need to take as their point of departure the world of immediate lived experience . . . from which all explications as to the nature and structure of reality must arise and to which they must return for validation. In my lived concreteness I experience presence in a world *somehow irreducibly given, vaguely apprehended as spread out in space and qualified by a temporal becoming*.[8]

From the givenness of experience, Schrag suggests that phenomenological analyses open up existential, ontological structures, explicating underlying conditions that inform human experience and providing categories for interpretation of such experiences.[9] Thus we can begin to understand the compelling relationship between hermeneutics and existential phenomenology, or "hermeneutic phenomenology."[10]

Hermeneutic phenomenology and rhetoric meet decisively in Augustine. We have seen the prima facie case for this in the structure of *On Christian Doctrine*; the sense of the text is fraught with such connections as well. In the prologue, Augustine introduces his rationale for Christian learning through the example of literacy and the value of texts.[11] Hermeneutics is the primary mode of inquiry from which he advocates the study of the liberal arts, including the study of pagan authors.[12] How could a person interpret

the Scriptures, divinely revealed through ordinary people in decidedly different times and places, without a deep knowledge of different times, places, and ideas?[13] Augustine espouses the value of "historical narration" in *On Christian Doctrine.*[14] He then practices it in the *Confessions*, opening up the meaning of human life and lives through a coherent, intertextual narrative of a decentered subjectivity and fragmented will.[15]

The Scriptures permeate and center Augustine's account, but all sorts of other people and discourses inhabit the text of the *Confessions*—which is a narrative uniting hermeneutics and rhetoric as a practical philosophy of communication. In fact, the Scriptures are not the end of Augustine's hermeneutic project, as is often asserted; rather, they are the beginning. In the *Confessions*, he demonstrates the expansive applications of his hermeneutic theory to the Scriptures; to human texts, Christian and pagan, sacred and secular; and to the narrative of his own life.[16] To explain Augustine's work in hermeneutics and rhetoric in the words of his teacher, Cicero, speaking well requires both *wisdom* and *eloquence*. Good hermeneutics is a form of rhetorical invention: the practical wisdom required to interpret texts, to interpret different times and places, and to interpret experience. And interpretation requires phenomenological engagement. Meaning is not self-evident, whether textual, historical, or experiential. In Augustine, wisdom and hermeneutics function synonymously, as do eloquence and rhetoric, a perspective that positions hermeneutics and rhetoric as complementary and inseparable in good practice. The emergence of hermeneutic phenomenology in Augustine reinforces the fact that such approaches are hospitable to perspectives informed by religious faith. As Schrag says, they often "include worship—encounters with the Holy, and 'acts of religious devotion.' "[17] The *Confessions* draws readers in "alongside" Augustine; people sense an open invitation to interpret their own lives *through* phenomenological engagement with Augustine hermeneutically and rhetorically. We turn now to common textual benchmarks in the *Confessions* as identified by continental philosophers working in hermeneutic phenomenology.

BENCHMARKS IN THE *CONFESSIONS*

Twentieth-century scholars discovered many ideas in Augustine that advanced their phenomenological inquiries, often in provocative, helpful ways. What Augustinian texts were formative to thinkers in twentieth-century phenomenology readings? And what ideas in those texts were sufficiently intriguing to merit serious consideration? Our study turns to a

preliminary review of these key texts that invited Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt, Albert Camus, Paul Ricoeur, Jacques Derrida, and Jean-François Lyotard into conversation with Augustine. They gather at the *Confessions*.

Augustine's *Confessions* can be read simply as a prototypical autobiography, one by a highly reflective bishop of Hippo. However, to read beyond books 1–9, where Augustine narrates his past life, into books 10–13 alters the reading experience dramatically. Explicit phenomenological inquiries begin in book 10 and book 11, the philosophical heart of the *Confessions.* Once engaged, the story in books 1–9 can never be read the same way again.[18] As we will learn, books 10 and 11 have provoked scholarly inquiry into Augustine's present significance. Book 10, on memory, presents a phenomenology of self unique within antiquity. Book 11, on time and eternity, presents an unprecedented phenomenology of temporal existence. Both books contain new insights generated from Augustine's received traditions—Jerusalem, Athens, and Rome; rhetoric, philosophy, and theology; orality, literacy, and incarnation.

BOOK 10: ELUSIVE SUBJECTIVITY

Heidegger's lectures on the phenomenology of religion rely on book 10 as the existential and phenomenological nexus of the *Confessions.* Heidegger—lecturing through the whole of book 10 section by section—identifies the predominant phenomenological text in chapter 33: "For in your sight I have become a riddle to myself, and that is my infirmity."[19] Book 10 draws his attention because it "can be easily demarcated from the other books, as Augustine no longer relates his past, but rather tells what he is now: " 'In ipso tempore confessionum mearum,' quod sim (what I am 'in the very time of the making of my confessions')."[20] Heidegger devotes substantial attention to a phenomenologically rich consideration of temptation in chapters 30–38, and he explains Augustine's phenomenological sensibilities as follows:

> These experiences are not simply there, in a psychic stream, as it were, but they themselves are had in the experiencing. . . . And the question is precisely in what *manner of concern* these experiences are to be enacted. These experiences of concern are pulled together into a determinate manner of enactment according to their own sense—the sense of *finis curae delectatio* [the end of care, pleasure].[21]

Heidegger claims *not* that he is offering a phenomenological reading of the *Confessions* but that Augustine provides a phenomenological interpretation of himself.[22] Heidegger continues:

> Thus the enactment of experience is always insecure about itself. In the complex of experience, there is no *medias locus* [middle ground] where there are not counter-possibilities. . . . In experiencing, a devilish being-torn-apart has been uncovered. "Ecce vulnera mea non-abscondo," look I do not conceal my "wounds," . . . Augustine already considers it a valuable insight to understand that the *contentia* is, by itself, a hopelessness, and that it must be given, if it is to be "had" somehow. [23]

Phenomenological dynamics are pervasive in Heidegger's reading of the *Confessions*. He insists that to interpret Augustine "requires the most lithe dialectic in order to grasp those elements of the background that he, by relentless and understanding questioning, brings to light from the darkness of the soul, in order to grasp them in such a way that they flow in the fundamental direction of his *Confessions*, and of book X in particular."[24] Augustine's focus on the point of decision in the present moment of temptation piques Heidegger's interest. First, he discounts readings of temptation in the *Confessions* that interpret Augustine as a "moralizer" or one "lost in psychological analysis." The interpretations must connect with the "real question—searching for God."[25]

Heidegger describes Augustine's inquiry on temptation as epistemology in enactment. Acknowledging that *Confessions*, book 10, carefully explores the self from the inside out, the point of the conversation is not, finally, the self. Heidegger explains that Augustine works with temptation discursively: "The characterization of language—more precisely, of speaking, of communicating oneself and hearing, as the source of this form of *tentatio*—leads the communal-worldly context of experience back to the decisive manner of the *enactment* of communal-worldly experiencing."[26] Appended notes on the same material reinforce the communal emphasis and the commitments suggested in *Confessions*, book 10, to language's phenomenological importance: " 'Quotidiana fornax nostra est humana lingua' [Our daily furnace is the human language]. Language as a manner of enactment of communal-worldly (concrete factical) experiencing."[27] Having worked through Augustine's own reflections on his experience of temptation involving every sense perception and the internal turnings of speech and will, Heidegger summarizes the discussion of temptation in terms of its originality:

> The interpretation as a whole "runs" in such a way that it now takes the return route, and indeed in such a way that the explication becomes visibly more original. (*Tota vita–tentatio* [The whole life—temptation]: "Non ut ipse discat, sed ut quod in homine latet aperiat (for the human being itself, having oneself)" [We do not learn for ourselves, but so that what hides in humans becoming apparent (for the human being itself, having oneself)]. "In tentatione apparet, quails sit homo" [In temptation appears what kind of a human being one is].—"Nescit se homo, nisi in tentatione discat se" [You do not know a human being unless you have gotten to know him in temptation]. [28]

This discussion represents Heidegger's fuller interpretation of *Confessions*, book 10, which exemplifies Augustine's original contributions to phenomenology of religion. He regards Augustine's reach as expansive and authentic, by contrast to what he refers to as "today's unhealthy, non-genuine, religious fraud (mere metaphysical curiosity—with the gesture of inwardness)."[29]

Arendt, a student of Heidegger's, also begins her inquiry into Augustine with *Confessions*. In *Love and Saint Augustine*, Arendt argues that book 10 takes Augustine well beyond traditional philosophical categories, revealing his phenomenological sensibilities. Remarking specifically on book 10.33, Arendt says:

> The more he withdrew into himself and gathered his self from the dispersion and distraction of the world, the more he "became a question to himself" [*questio mihi factus sum*]. Hence, it is by no means a simple withdrawal into himself that Augustine opposes to the loss of self in dispersion and distraction, but rather a turning about of the question itself and the discovery that this self is even more impenetrable than the "hidden works of nature." What Augustine expects of God is an answer to the question, "Who am I?"—the certainty of which all previous philosophy had taken for granted. Or, to put it another way, it was because of this new quest for the self that he finally turned to God, whom he did not ask to reveal to him the mysteries of the universe or even the perplexities of Being. He asks to "hear about myself" from God and thus "to know myself."[30]

Later in *Love and Saint Augustine*, Arendt finds that book 10.33 makes speaking of being and existence no simple thing. Placing the problem of self in memory forces Augustine to recognize the self as created, not the Creator, which results in the exchangeability of "the beginning and end of his life." The realization propels Arendt to pursue questions (1) of being, (2) of the human ability to discover something that cannot be experienced, and (3) of

"what sort of a world is it into which created man is born and to which he both does and does not belong?"[31] Anchored in book 10, these continue to intrigue her; the implications of createdness resurface repeatedly and produce, for man, "specific doubts about his own being."[32]

Camus, historically parallel to Arendt, demonstrates, in *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, how Augustine delivers a "second revelation" of Christian evangelical faith, not contradictory to the first revelation in the early church, but rare in practice and unique philosophically.[33] Book 10 is a summary of Augustine's revelatory accomplishment for Camus—a distinctly Christian, compelling metaphysic—which he describes as "the reconciliation of a metaphysics and a religion, of the Word and the Flesh, without, to tell the truth, Christianity's original physiognomy being lost in that reconciliation."[34] Trinitarian Christology predicates Camus' pronouncement of Augustine's synthesis of Greek philosophy and Christian faith. "The Word has already been made flesh; its body is real, earthly and born of a woman. This union of body and word is indestructible."[35] He concludes, "Everything is justified by one fact: Jesus' incarnation."[36] Camus defines the terms and conditions of Augustine's contributions phenomenologically. Although he does not work out the details, he sees a specific, global implication: "At the time of Saint Augustine's death, Christianity was formed into a philosophy. It is now sufficiently armed to resist the tempest in which all will founder. During the long years, it remains the only common hope and the only effective shield against the calamity of the Western world."[37] Camus himself is not finally persuaded to embrace even Augustine's strong form of Christianity. His observations do not lead him to a Christian philosophical stance, but he respects Augustine throughout his life. Lyotard maintains a similar stance.

A renowned critic of modernity in the West, Lyotard begins his last book, *The Confession of Augustine*, with a long quote from the middle of book 10.[38] Though Lyotard's discussion ranges widely across Augustine's *Confessions*, he makes more than twenty references to book 10, including two direct references to 10.33's "I became a riddle/question to myself. . . ."[39] Lyotard offers a radical reading of the *Confessions* that is simultaneously faithful to Augustine's text and to Lyotard's own rhetorical and phenomenological sensibilities. He seems to admit the Confessor in the *Confessions* to "open" him up from the inside out, in the flesh and in the spirit. That is, Lyotard is not concerned exclusively with time; he seems unwilling to reduce eternity to a temporal construct. As Hent de Vries suggests, it is plausible to read *The Confession of Augustine* as allowing that Lyotard may be inclined to

understand subjective distention in terms of a created temporality derivative of an uncreated eternity.[40]

Similarly, book 10 figures prominently in Derrida's "Circumfession"; he references it in eight different segments.[41] Derrida's "Circumfession" and his account of its writing further open alternative, radically phenomenological readings of *Confessions*. Derrida purports to mislead Augustine, although to some degree he ends up sounding like an Augustinian conformist. Explaining his thinking in "Circumfession," Derrida says:

> A confession is never mine. If it were mine, it wouldn't be a confession. It is always the other in me who confesses. . . . It is the other who decides in me. It is always the other who makes the decision, who cuts—a decision means cutting. That is the etymology; to decide means to cut. It is to interrupt the continuity of time and the course of history, to cut. For such a cut to occur, someone must interrupt me in my own continuity. If I decide what I can decide, I don't decide. For me to decide, I must have in myself someone who cuts, who interrupts the possibility. If I do only what I can do, what is possible for me, I do nothing. The decision is the other's decision in me.[42]

Augustine confirms Derrida's claims. Book 10 of the *Confessions* argues that a true confession cannot belong to any one person, since truth is the "common property of all lovers of the truth," and Augustine would also agree with the fact that no person is ever fully alone, even the inner self.[43] As a dialogue, "Circumfession" reads as a direct, faithful encounter in which the older Algerian brother, Augustine, provokes the younger brother, Jacques, to tears through his own tears.[44] Caputo and Scanlon describe "Circumfession" as just such a response to provocation: "a journal he kept as his mother lay dying in Nice, like Monica in Ostia, creating an odd and beautiful dialogue with Augustine that contained long grafts of Augustine's *Confessions* in Latin."[45] Notably, Derrida walks with Augustine through questions of incarnation and memory, made poignant by his own mother's illness and by reflection on rites of circumcision with myriad associations with his mother, their extended family, and their religious community.

What makes book 10 a common entry point? The continental authors discussed here were pursuing different projects for divergent purposes across the twentieth century. But in book 10 Augustine does not theorize phenomenology; he practices it. Notably, none of these works merely "appropriates" Augustine. Rather, they grapple with the ideas alongside him. The work of book 10 may be nascent, but it is prescient, not primitive. The continental

authors speak of the *Confessions* as if Augustine's phenomenological sensibilities appear fully grown in book 10 ex nihilo.

BOOK 11: TEMPORALITY AND ETERNITY

The catalytic character of the *Confessions*' hermeneutics and rhetoric is evident in books 10 *and* 11 for Gadamer. From Gadamer's perspective, Augustine is vital to the genesis of hermeneutic phenomenology. In *Truth and Method*, Gadamer notes that book 10 places Augustine at the "center of the history of memory" where he single-handedly transforms the received ancient tradition from Plato and Pythagoras.[46] Augustine's contributions to memory and the philosophy of language, appearing first in the *Confessions* and explicated more fully in *On the Trinity*, introduce the phenomenological dynamics of the inner and outer word as well as *Verbum* (Eternal Word) and *verba* (temporal words). Not nearly as well known is Gadamer's introduction to book 11 on time and eternity (available in English translation for the first time in this volume). In book 11, he finds compelling questions of being and time, processive identity, and a hermeneutic approach to philosophy of language as well as to human reason and expression. John Arthos explains that Gadamer's reading of book 11 demonstrates Augustine's pertinence.

Husserl introduced book 11 to the emerging world of phenomenology through lectures given in 1904–1905 in Göttingen, Germany, published first in 1928 by Husserl's student Martin Heidegger as chapters in *The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness*. Heidegger, writing as editor for the project, called Husserl's lectures an explication of "phenomenological time," a theme that constitutes the "intentional character of time-consciousness and the developing fundamental elucidation of *intentionality*."[47] Husserl invoked Augustine to launch the conversation:

> The analysis of time-consciousness is an age-old crux of descriptive psychology and theory of knowledge. The first thinker to be deeply sensitive to the immense difficulties to be found here was Augustine, who labored almost to despair over this problem. Chapters 13–18 of book XI of the *Confessions* must even today be thoroughly studied by everyone concerned with the problem of time. For no one in this knowledge-proud modern generation has made more masterful or significant progress in these matters than this great thinker who struggled so earnestly with the problem. One may still say with Augustine: *si nemo a me quaerat, scio, si quaerenti explicare velim, nescio* [If no one asks me, I know; if I want to explain it to someone who does ask me, I do not know].[48]

Heidegger understood Augustine's work in phenomenological terms, as discussed previously. His insights were comprehensive, not limited to *Confessions*, book 10. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger explained that "in principle even the Interpretation of Dasein as temporality does not lie beyond the horizon of the ordinary conception of time." As evidence he cites *Confessions*, 11.34.26, where Augustine says, "For this reason it seemed to me that time is nothing more than distention: but of what thing I know not, and the marvel is, if it is not of the mind itself."

Phenomenological considerations of time seem to begin with *Confessions* in book 11. Ricoeur, in *Time and Narrative*, explains why. He conducts a close reading of *Confessions* 11.14.17–11.27.37 that provides insight into book 11's phenomenological intrigue and the provocation to engage Augustine. As Ricoeur observes, "This is the very movement [from *Verbum* to *verba* in book 11] that is narrated by the first nine books of the *Confessions*. And in this sense the narration actually accomplishes the itinerary whose conditions of possibility are reflected upon in Book 11."[49] Ricoeur's reading of book 11 benchmarks three major points: (1) the dynamic nature of Augustine's inquiry concerning time, (2) the centrality of language to that inquiry, and (3) the continuing intensification of temporality that results from its relationship to eternity. Augustine learns through rigorous questioning. Ricoeur observes that Augustine always proceeds "on the basis of *aporias* handed down by the tradition, but the resolution of each *aporia* gives rise to new difficulties which never cease to spur on his inquiry. . . . Augustine is seeking (the verb *quaerrere*, we shall see, appears repeatedly throughout the text)."[50] Ricoeur's own entry point into the text of book 11 is an example:

> We may deplore the fact if we like, but the phenomenology of time emerges out of an ontological question: *quid est enim tempus?* ("What, then, is time?" [11.14:17].) As soon as this question is posed, all the ancient difficulties regarding the being and nonbeing of time surge forth. But it is noteworthy that, from the start, Augustine's inquisitive style imposes itself. [51]

As the inquiry into time begins in book 11, questions about language become barely distinguishable from questions about time. Similarly, Ricoeur laments Augustine's conflation of language theory and argumentation, saying, "There is no description without a discussion."[52] However, he also acknowledges that "it is remarkable that it is language usage that provisionally provides the resistance to the thesis of nonbeing."[53] The juxtaposition of philosophy to rhetoric strikes Ricoeur as an impurity, but he grudgingly reports that Augustine's ontological question generates phenomenological

insight and opens further inquiry.[54] Furthermore, Ricoeur observes that Augustine preserves a phenomenology of being in the process. The final condition of temporality makes *Confessions* book 11 indispensable. Having worked through the entire discourse on time, Ricoeur concludes that Augustine does not discount, dismiss, or diminish time. Instead, the inquiry promotes a more radical temporality than could have been anticipated initially. Ricoeur attributes the "hyper-temporality" of book 11 to Augustine's twofold conversion to Christianity:

> Neither the conversion recounted in Book 8, nor even the ecstasy of Ostia which marks the culmination of the narrative in Book 9, ever eliminate the temporal condition of the soul. These two culminating experiences only put an end to wandering, the fallen form of the *distention animi*. But this is done in order to inspire a peregrination that sends the soul off again on the roads of time. Peregrination and narration are grounded in time's approximation of eternity, which, far from abolishing their difference, never stops contributing to it. [55]

In other words, the inquiry on time and eternity in *Confessions*, book 11, grounds phenomenology and rhetoric by both intensifying and deepening time exponentially. Eternity exacerbates the existential and phenomenological character of temporal life.[56]

INTERPRETIVE ASSUMPTIONS AND THE INCARNATION

The roots of continental conversations on hermeneutic phenomenology have been traced genealogically to *Confessions*, books 10 and 11. Beginning with these two books, Augustine charts new intellectual territory and opens new spatial and temporal categories for rhetoric and phenomenology. In the process, he necessarily moves beyond Platonic and Plotinian philosophies. Nevertheless, such readings depart from much of the traditional scholarship on Augustine and the *Confessions*. And the continental scholars under consideration here provide various accounts of Augustine's departure.

Heidegger and Arendt argue that the *Confessions* can best be understood phenomenologically, and they focus initially on Augustine as developing a Plotinian philosophy in a Christian frame. As Arendt says, "Augustine's dogmatic subservience to scriptural and ecclesiastical authority will be largely alien to our analyses, which are . . . on principle, in keeping with their essence and significance, not dogmatically bound."[57] Arendt goes on to suggest that Augustine never exercised a choice between philosophy and

religious faith, that "he never wholly lost the impulse of philosophical questioning . . . never extirpated this impulse from his thinking."[58] She seems to assert that Augustine's important questions emerge from and are rooted in philosophy, even if clothed in Christianity. This initial position rests upon an accepted assumption in Arendt's own day that Neoplatonism was the formative force behind Augustine's philosophy. Major streams of Augustinian scholarship had, at that time, reduced discussion of *Confessions* to arguments over degrees of Neoplatonism and its interpenetration with Christianity—claiming that his faith contributed little to his philosophy. Inasmuch as these perspectives provided an opening though which Heidegger or Arendt could gain intellectual access to the *Confessions*, so much the better. During the same era in the United States, Kenneth Burke wrote his *Rhetoric of Religion* and followed the same standard assumption in his interpretation of the *Confessions*—that Augustine was either a Neoplatonist operating under the cloak of Christian rules and rites or devout in a Christianity fashioned by Neoplatonism.[59]

However, more recent scholarship on the *Confessions* challenges the terms of the Neoplatonism debate, arguing that the text of the *Confessions*—in both form and content—resists such conventional interpretations. Arguments against dominant Neoplatonic readings of the *Confessions* suggest that such interpretations can be sustained only by bracketing crucial textual content and importing nontextual material. Alternative readings argue from the text of the *Confessions* itself that Augustine's phenomenological insights are contra-Neoplatonic.[60] Therefore, it is interesting to note that Arendt and Heidegger ultimately modify their Neoplatonic readings of *Confessions*, book 10. For example, Heidegger says in his lecture notes that "the *frui* is . . . the basic characteristic of the Augustinian *basic posture toward life itself*." After discussing connections of *frui* to aesthetics and medieval theology, he adds the following qualification: "however, the 'fruitio' in Augustine is not the specifically Plotinian one, which culminates in intuition, but is rooted in the peculiarly Christian view of factical life."[61] Arendt makes a similar observation from book 10:

> It is in this context that Augustine definitely departs from contemporary philosophical teachings, Stoic and Neoplatonic, and strikes out on his own. For unlike Epictetus or Plotinus, he did not find either self-sufficiency or serenity in this inner region of the self. Augustine does not belong to those "who can act well within themselves so that actual deeds will result from this (*qui aliquid boni vobiscum intus agistis unde facta procedunt*). On

> the contrary, may God see 'where I am . . . and have mercy and heal me' (Psalm 6:2)."[62]

Arendt does not retract her early comments on Neoplatonic readings and remnants in the *Confessions*.[63] But she does argue that Augustine is contra-Neoplatonic regarding the self. "Self-discovery and discovery of God coincide," says Arendt, "because by withdrawing into myself I have ceased to belong to the world. This is the reason that God then comes to my help. In a way I already belong to God. Why should I belong to God when I am in quest of myself? What is the relationship, or perhaps, the affinity between self and God?"[64] *Confessions*, book 10, supplies the answer for Arendt, who explains, "In other words, this God who is *my* God, the right object of my desire and my love, is the quintessence of my inner self and therefore by no means identical with it."[65] The self of book 10 does not emanate nor unite with "the One" in a transcendental union of identity with God; personal identity remains distinct.

Thus, both Arendt and Heidegger initially document Neoplatonic influence in Augustine's work but depart from such conventions in their own readings as inadequate to account for the ideas in the text. Augustine himself states that Neoplatonism discounts basic Christian metaphors upon which the *Confessions* relies–incarnation and the twofold rule of charity.[66] These metaphors—along with memory, time, and eternity—ground Augustine's phenomenological and rhetorical sensibilities developed most clearly in books 10 and 11. Therefore, Arendt and Heidegger find themselves moving away from Neoplatonic readings and pointing in a different direction; they recognize that Neoplatonic impulses work *against* faithful rhetorical and phenomenological readings of *Confessions*.

Camus, for whom Augustine may be the only authentic Christian because he was the "only great Christian mind who looked the problem of evil in the face," goes to some length in *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism* to explain how Augustine generates an original Christian philosophy, not one that is Neoplatonic.[67] Augustine departs from Neoplatonism completely: "the figure of Jesus and the problem of Redemption will transfigure everything."[68] Augustine's Christology, which relates the incarnate Word synthetically within the Trinity "already goes beyond Plotinianism" and separates the Word from "Neoplatonic Intelligence."[69] In short, Camus argues that Augustine uses a Plotinian method to accomplish a radical transformation—a fusion of Christianity and philosophy by Incarnation.[70] Camus observes:

> At bottom, the enigma is that this fusion had worked at all, because though the Greco-Roman world's sensibility was open to the Gospel, Reason itself refused to accept a certain number of postulates. Providentialism, creationism, philosophy of history, a taste for humility, all the themes we have pointed out run counter to the Greek attitude. . . . The task of the conciliators was to transform the very instrument of this attitude, that is to say, Reason, governed by the principle of contradiction, into a notion shaped by the idea of participation.[71]

Camus argues that Plotinus "went halfway" in this project; Augustine finishes the job.[72] Camus explicates, in philosophical and theological terms, what others with phenomenological sensibilities have pointed toward—that Augustine makes original contributions that are other than Neoplatonic. In *Confessions*, as in other texts, Augustine offers only a brief refutation of "the Platonists."[73] His primary purpose is not critical but expansive. He moves in new directions that depart from Neoplatonism to advance new ideas. It is this motion to which Ricoeur refers when he says, "The Augustinian analysis of time offers a highly interrogative and even aporetical character which none of the ancient theories of time, from Plato to Plotinus, had carried to such a degree of acuteness."[74] In other words, these continental authors engage the *Confessions* not according to Neoplatonic themes but as a protophenomenology with deep rhetorical sensibilities.

CONCLUSION

Faithful to their respective philosophical commitments, Heidegger, Arendt, Camus, Gadamer, Ricoeur, Derrida, and Lyotard gravitated to books 10 and 11 of Augustine's *Confessions* as fruitful for inquiry. Resonant issues include temporality and eternity, incarnation and enactment, and the elusiveness of subjectivity. While some have attributed his phenomenological insights exclusively to philosophy, these thinkers acknowledge that the phenomenological resonances are grounded to some extent in Augustine's Christianity. Furthermore, they suggest that the philosophy driving the *Confessions* toward hermeneutics and rhetoric is not primarily Neoplatonic. Given that these scholars consider Augustine's phenomenological propensities as philosophically rich—neither anomalous nor accidental—the facticity of the incarnation and the redemption to which Camus refers may contribute much to the development of Augustine's coordinates for rhetoric and philosophy of communication. Already, phenomenological readings of the *Confessions* provide substantial warrant to pursue such issues, and these readings

comport with Augustine's direct consideration of such questions in the text. For example, early in book 10, Augustine says:

> Yet this your Word would be but little to me, if he had given his precepts in speech alone and had not gone on before me by deeds. I do this service by deeds as well as by words: I do this "under your wings," with too grave a peril unless "under your wings" my soul had been subdued to you and my infirmity made known to you.[75]

The end of book 10, an extended hymn on the incarnation, reiterates, "We could think that your Word is far from union with men, and we could despair of ourselves, unless he had been 'made flesh and dwelt among us.' "[76] These "bookends" for book 10 could be dismissed as literary window dressing—terms to distract the devout from the existential phenomenology of book 10.33. But other readings, as continental philosophers have suggested, are available and under consideration. The essays that follow in this volume represent the rich prospects for interpretations willing to hold Augustine's rhetoric and philosophy in dynamic tension with his Christianity.

2

Augustine and Heidegger on Acknowledging the Importance of Acknowledgment and the Orator's Art

Michael J. Hyde

Saint Augustine's *Confessions* tells the story of how its author, struggling with his "restless heart," heard and responded to God's call. The work, to be sure, is a religious touchstone for the act of acknowledgment. (The word "confess" is from the Latin *confiteri*, meaning "to acknowledge.") Martin Heidegger was also influenced by this text; it played a role in his phenomenological investigation of human being (*Dasein*) in *Being and Time*, a work that changed the course of twentieth-century continental philosophy and its interest in the question What is the meaning, the truth, of Being?[1] Heidegger attended to the "call of Being" as diligently as Augustine attended to the call of God.

Augustine would certainly claim that the particular evocation that concerned him and that he acknowledged was a more original and more holy call than the one that caught Heidegger's attention. Heidegger neither affirms nor rejects this claim. He does, however, maintain that " 'Being' . . . is not God and not a cosmic ground. Being is farther than all beings and is yet nearer to man than every being, be it a rock, a beast, a work of art, a machine, be it an angel or God. Being is the nearest. Yet the near remains farthest from man."[2] Augustine maintains the same thing about God. The Lord "is nearer to me than myself."[3] We forget or do not genuinely understand this condition of the self, according to Augustine, because we are too caught up in and distracted by the routines and habits of everyday life, too preoccupied with "earthly things." Heidegger makes the same argument with respect to the self's authentic relationship with Being.[4]

As discussed throughout the *Confessions*, Augustine saw the self's lived experience of some personal crisis—that is, a disruption that causes

a breakdown in the self's everyday relationship with things and with others—as being a crucial catalyst for opening us to God's call. Heidegger, too, credits such crisis with bringing about, on the part of the self, the acknowledgment that is needed to understand the truth of Being. As will be discussed in greater detail below, Heidegger finds in Augustine's *Confessions* existential directives that help to explain the dynamics of this all-important ontological occurrence. Augustine, for Heidegger, is a case study in how the self experiences its existence as it hears and responds to the call of Being.[5] Augustine, of course, would have us change this last term, but Heidegger has his reasons for not doing so:

> Only from the truth of Being can the essence of the holy be thought. Only from the essence of the holy is the essence of divinity to be thought. Only in the light of the essence of divinity can it be thought or said what the word "God" is to signify. . . . How can man at the present stage of world history ask at all seriously and rigorously whether the god nears or withdraws, when he has above all neglected to think into the dimension in which alone that question can be asked?[6]

The thinking that is being called for here is a product of acknowledgment: that capacity of consciousness that enables us *to be open* to the world of people, places, and things as much as possible so that we can "admit" (Middle English: *acknow*) its wonders into our minds and then "admit" (Middle English: *knowlechen*) to others the understanding we have gained and that we believe is worth sharing. "Acknowledgment," writes Heidegger, "lets that toward which it goes come toward it."[7] A more detailed understanding of the theological, existential, and ontological workings of the phenomena is advanced throughout this essay.

Augustine's influence on Heidegger is well documented, although, to the best of my knowledge, the relationship has not been discussed with a specific focus on how the phenomenon of acknowledgment plays a role in their work.[8] In taking this approach, another topic necessarily comes to the fore: rhetoric. Acknowledgment encourages the practice of the orator's art, which, in turn, can help cultivate this state of consciousness. Both Augustine and Heidegger consider this relationship between acknowledgment and rhetoric. Their assessments admit similarities and differences that speak for and against the worthiness of the orator's art. When all is said and done, however, the importance of this art for the well-being of humankind can be traced back to what Augustine and Heidegger, respectively, hold so dear: God and Being.

God and Being

The "authority" of religion makes much of the act of acknowledgment: "Where art thou?" "Here I am!" As evidenced throughout the Old Testament, this specific question-answer exchange lies at the heart of Judeo-Christian thought. The question initiates a call for acknowledgment. The first one to hear and answer the call was Adam. The rhetoric of religion is a consequence of people joining in the activity: acknowledging in word and deed an "Otherness"—the One true source of wisdom, goodness, and perfection—that calls on humankind to help in doing its work. God "speaks" the first "call of conscience." God summons a hearing and demands a response. For even God, as Rabbi Abraham Heschel reminds us, "is in search of man" in order to be acknowledged and to have the truth prevail.[9] Saint Augustine states the matter this way in the famous opening of his *Confessions*: "You stir man to take pleasure in praising you, because you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until its rests with you."[10]

Augustine is dedicated to remaining open to the true meaning of the Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Only after God "spoke" and created the largest ever-opening place there is—the universe—could life begin. The Word (Logos) at work here was the ultimate *avowal*, coming as it did from One uttering declarative speech ("Let there be light!") whose function was "to bring and show forth" (*epideixis*) at the appropriate moment (*kairos*) the truth of what was on One's mind (some object of consciousness, such as "heaven" and "earth"). God is the Great Avower: the one who declares most assuredly, openly, bluntly, and without shame. Such an open declaration or avowal is, of course, also known as an instance of acknowledgment. By way of this phenomenon, God created the place where all other acts of acknowledgment could happen. The importance of the phenomenon should be obvious: without God's original act of acknowledgment, nothing exists. Without acknowledgment, God has nothing to do. Without acknowledgment, God is a rather vacuous concept. God acknowledges us, and we are called to return the favor: to open ourselves to God's truth and the teachings that come with it, and thereby to keep God alive in our hearts and minds. God and human beings are joined together authentically by the life-giving gift of acknowledgment. It is God's will, as far as Augustine can tell.

Science rightly cautions against accepting unquestioningly this metaphysical and onto-theological understanding of acknowledgment. As the physicist and cosmologist Paul Davies notes, "Our ignorance of the origin

of life leaves plenty of scope for divine explanations, but that is purely a negative attitude, invoking 'the God-of-the-gaps' only to risk retreat at a later date in the face of scientific advance." Hence, "To invoke God as a blanket explanation of the unexplained is to invite eventual falsification, and make God the friend of ignorance. If God is to be found, it must surely be through what we discover about the world, not what we fail to discover."[11]

Notice that, with this way of thinking, scientists do God a favor by acknowledging the possibility of the Creator while at the same time saying that the best way to do this is to not acknowledge this possibility because it gets in the way and undercuts the scientific endeavor. This endeavor is made possible by the opening function of acknowledgment, which science is compelled to harness as it adheres to a commanding ethic: Empirically oriented investigations and descriptions of "the things themselves" should go as far as they possibly can in disclosing the truth of these things before we allow our metaphysical impulses for order and completeness to encourage a rush to judgment and a corresponding "leap of faith." The Nobel Prize–winning physicist Richard Feynman has this ethic of acknowledgment in mind when he emphasizes how in science "openness to possibility is an opportunity. Doubt and discussion are essential to progress."[12] Scientists must open themselves to the awesome wonders of the world. Acknowledgment is central to their livelihood. And, of course, one need not necessarily appeal to the "mind of God" to explain why this is so. Rather, as the astronomer royal of Great Britain, Sir Michael Rees, points out, one need only try to find a way to explain why the evolution of our universe allows for it to be " 'cognizable,' in the sense that it permitted some kind of conscious entity or 'observer' to evolve within it."[13] Despite their differences, though, science and religion have a genuine passion for acknowledgment; it enables them to do what they do in the name of truth.

Yes, acknowledgment, *not merely recognition*. People often speak of these two phenomena as if they were the same. For the purposes of this essay, however, their difference must be kept in mind. As Calvin Schrag reminds us, "The blurring of the grammar of acknowledgment with the grammar of recognition is one of the more glaring misdirections of modern epistemology."[14] The definition of "recognition" found in the *Oxford English Dictionary* reads, "The action or fact of perceiving that some thing, person, etc., is the same as one previously known; the mental process of identifying what has been known before; the fact of being thus known or identified." The phenomenon of acknowledgment, however, entails more than the mental process of identifying what has been known before. The ethos

of acknowledgment establishes an environment where people can take the time to open themselves to and know together some topic of interest and, in the process, perhaps gain a more authentic understanding of the matter at hand. Recognition is only a preliminary step in this process of attuning one's consciousness toward otherness in this way. Acknowledgment makes possible the moral development of recognition by enabling us to remain open to the world of people, places, and things even if, at times, matters become boring or troublesome.

As with religion and science, so, too, with phenomenology: acknowledgment lies at the heart of its enterprise. As originally formulated by Heidegger's teacher, Edmund Husserl, phenomenology defines a procedure of returning to the immediate content of experience to analyze and describe this content as it actually presents itself to one's consciousness. With Husserl, the ultimate goal is to develop a "pure descriptive science of essential being."[15] Heidegger emphasizes that phenomenological inquiry seeks to disclose with "demonstrative precision" the appearance or "presencing" of some phenomenon, "to let that which shows itself [*phainesthai*] be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself."[16] Phenomenology, in other words, attempts to generate a discourse that is especially open and attuned to the way some phenomenon happens, to how it reveals or manifests itself to consciousness within the temporal horizon of human understanding. The discourse of phenomenology is dedicated to acknowledgment: it assumes the task of disclosing a phenomenon's own disclosure, *its* being and truth. It may thus be said that phenomenology is a truth-telling activity, for as Heidegger points out, truth *happens* first and foremost as a disclosing of the world, a revealing or uncovering of the "givenness" of something that is perceived to be.[17] The symbolic formulation of any truth claim presupposes the happening of this process, which is always already at work as things, people, and circumstances show themselves to one's consciousness such that they may have their presence affirmed. Such "affirmation consists in acknowledgment," writes Heidegger.[18] Phenomenology goes about acknowledging and telling the truth by "letting-something-be-seen" with its discourse, and it performs the activity by avoiding as much as possible God-of-the-gaps thinking.

Heidegger identifies phenomenology's disclosing or evocative use of discourse with what he defines as the "essential being of language" (*Logos*): its "saying" power, its capacity to "speak" by pointing to and showing us something.[19] "Language speaks," insists Heidegger, and it does so especially in discourses that warrant praise for being revelatory and perhaps even awe

inspiring because of the way they acknowledge and disclose their subject matter, thereby enabling us to better understand and appreciate it. For example, to understand and appreciate what Abraham Lincoln is trying to tell us with the Gettysburg Address, we must listen not only to him (which of course we can no longer do) but also to the power of his language as it displays a capacity for making manifest certain matters of importance, for saying something to us by showing us what this something is thought to be. If the Gettysburg Address is to speak to us in a truthful manner, this, at the very least, is what it must do: through an act of saying, of showing, it must give us something to understand.

Heidegger reminds us that the oldest word for "saying" is *Logos*: "Saying which, in showing, lets beings appear in their 'it is.' "[20] The saying power of language is what enables any discourse to give expression to things that call for attention. Heidegger further reminds us that the word for "saying" (*Logos*) is also the word for "Being." Indeed, Being is constantly disclosing and showing itself in how things are, in the presencing of all that lies before us, in the circumstances of life that call for thought. As it comes to us in the existence of beings, the truth of Being is a saying, a showing, a phenomenon that presents itself for understanding. This is what Heidegger is referring to when he speaks of the "call of Being": that primordial "saying" of the world whose showing is thought provoking. The discourse of phenomenology must be responsive to the "silent voice" of this most fundamental calling: one that comes before what Heidegger or anyone else can say about it.

Heidegger makes much of how the "special distinctiveness" of human being that differentiates it from other entities is that this entity, whether it realizes it or not, *is concerned with* the call of Being.

> We constantly comport ourselves toward beings and are beings. We discern not only about ourselves that we are beings, but about our being that we are concerned, one way or another, with ourselves and how we are. Being concerns us, whether it is a matter of the being that we are ourselves or those beings that we are not and never can be. We are always that being that is concerned with being, who, thus concerned and struck, finds in being what is most reliable.[21]

Heidegger emphasizes that in being this way, human being reveals itself as the "dwelling place" (*ethos*), the "site," the "clearing" or "opening" wherein Being is disclosed and made meaningful. "Disclosedness," according to Heidegger, is the fundamental characteristic of *Dasein*; it denotes how human being is authentically related to Being. Human being is the witness for

Being, the only creature capable of hearing and responding to a call that announces itself in the presencing of all that lies before us and that may then be disclosed to a certain degree in the interpretive workings of discourse or other symbolic activities.[22] Reflecting on the meaningfulness of this experience, we can and often do (as in times of personal crisis, for example) raise the question of what it means to be. The question makes explicit our concern for Being. Only human being is concerned enough to do this—to ask the question, think it through to some extent, and then say something about what is thought.

Augustine is engaged in this process throughout the *Confessions* as he questions how it is that he loves God and thereby offers an account of his Christian conversion and the crisis that brought it about: the realization that his everyday pagan ways made his life "a region of destitution."[23] Consider the following example:

> And what is the object of my love? I asked the earth and it said: "It is not I." I asked all that is in it; they made the same confession (Job 28: 12f.). I asked the sea, the deeps, the living creatures that creep, and they responded: "We are not your God, look beyond us." . . . I asked heaven, sun, moon and stars; they said: "Nor are we the God whom you seek." And I said to all these things in my external environment: "tell me of my god who you are not, tell me something about him." And with a great voice they cried out: "He made us" (Ps. 99: 3). My question was the attention I gave to them, and their response was their beauty.[24]

There is acknowledgment going on here. Countering the destitution of his life, Augustine opens himself to his external environment like never before. He attends to beings that are all too easily taken for granted in the bustle of daily existence. He hears their call, their saying, and affirms their beauty, which he insists points to a Presence greater than themselves. The truth of this disclosure is, for Augustine, undeniable. Considered carefully, the showing and saying of beings provide evidence for the glory of God and sounds the question that comes with this unequaled epiphany: "Where art thou?" The response of the *Confessions* is clear: "Here I am!" With this response, Augustine converts his personal region of destitution into a more fitting dwelling place for welcoming One who is "being in a supreme degree."[25] God purportedly affirmed this status to Moses when offering the self-description "I am that I am." God is existence itself (Being)—and more.

Sometimes the world speaks to us in mysterious ways. Personal crises that call into question the "normalcy" of our everyday habits of thinking

and action are known to bring about the awesome experience. Is the Being of beings a sign of God's presence? Is not an unhesitating affirmative answer to this question an instance of "God-of-the-gaps" thinking? Wanting to avoid making this metaphysical inference, Heidegger continues acknowledging the empirical and phenomenological basis of what exactly is disclosed when a personal crisis disrupts our everyday ways of being in the world.

Depending on how disruptive they are, these crises can bring us face to face with the ontological structure of our own spatial and temporal existence. This structure functions to open us to the contingency of the future. Although typically measured by us with such inventions as clocks, calendars, maps, and computers, this entire process is not itself a human creation. The ecstatic way in which what was (the past) and what is (the present) are constantly open to the objective uncertainty of what is not yet (the future) defines an event that is always already at work before we decide to notice and calculate its presence. Human being, in other words, has something about *its very existence* (the perfection of its Being) that is *more* and thus *other* than its own making, something that shows itself to us when our everyday rituals and routines are disrupted and we must then face the future without the "assurances" that are provided by these social and psychological mechanisms of everyday life. A loved one dies unexpectedly, and we find ourselves in anxious wonder: "How am I going to live on without this person?" The disruption brings about what is commonly referred to as "a moment of truth." But this moment was there all along with the disclosing nature of the ontological structure of our existence. The dimension of objective uncertainty (the future) that is part of this structure operates in both a deconstructive way (to call us and our claimed truths into question) and in a reconstructive way (to call on our ability to assume the ethical responsibility of affirming our freedom through resolute choice such that we can regain and maintain some semblance of meaning in the face of uncertainty).[26]

Human being thus shows itself to be ontologically structured as an evocation and a provocation, or what Heidegger describes as the most original instance of "the call of conscience" that accompanies the call of Being. As it discloses itself to us, existence calls for the responsiveness of concerned thought and decisive action, for that which enables us, especially in the most distressful situations, to take charge of our lives as we assume the ethical responsibility of affirming our freedom of choice and thereby become personally involved in the creation of a meaningful existence. This is how systems of morality (e.g., institutionalized religion) come into being in the first place; they are the result of our enacting what Heidegger terms our

"authenticity" (German: *eigentlichkeit*, to make something *one's own*; to *own up* to the challenge posed by the call of conscience). The language of morality is the language of responsiveness and responsibility. Human being emits its own challenging call, its own call of conscience, before we create our moral institutions.[27] And keep in mind that this primordial spatial and temporal happening is not of our making. The ethos or dwelling place of human being has something about its nature that is *other* than what we decide to make of it—something whose objective uncertainty is the basis of "mystery." What will happen tomorrow? Who can say for sure? Otherness lies at the heart of human existence; it makes its presence known even when we are all alone. Being calls! Augustine hears the voice of God.

As he answers the call, Augustine makes clear that his personal crisis entailed a host of related existential occurrences. For example, reflecting on his life as an acclaimed public speaker and popular teacher of rhetoric in Milan, he notes that he "aspired to honours, money, marriage," but such "ambitions" were but a "wound" that made him exceedingly "unhappy." Augustine continues by explaining:

> How conscious you [God] made me of my misery, on that day when I was preparing to deliver a panegyric on the emperor. In the course of it I would tell numerous lies and for my mendacity would win the good opinion of people who knew it to be untrue. The anxiety of the occasion was making my heart palpitate and perspire with the destructing fever of the worry. . . . My education enabled me to seek to please men, not to impart to them any instruction, but merely to purvey pleasure. For that reason you "broke my bones" (Ps. 41:11; 50:10) with the rod of your discipline (Ps. 22:4).[28]

God's presence, especially as it is acknowledged in the Old Testament (e.g., Psalms), is well known for inciting the experience of anxiety, with its adverse physiological and psychological effects. The experience happens as God calls into question and thereby interrupts our daily preoccupations. Augustine is a case in point. God made him "conscious" of his egotistical and immoral ways, of how his "will" had become "distorted" such that his "desire" (*concupiscentia*) for true happiness was misled and he thus found emotional satisfaction primarily in carnal pursuits and secular ambition. Augustine explains the process when he notes:

> The consequence of a distorted will is passion. By servitude to passion, habit is formed, and habit to which there is no resistance becomes necessity. By these links . . . a harsh bondage held me under restraint. The new

> will, which was beginning to be within me a will to serve you freely and to enjoy you, God, the only sure source of pleasure, was not yet strong enough to conquer my older will, which had the strength of old habit.[29]

Augustine found himself in a state of "conflict," initiated by God and productive of anxiety. Compared to all other human emotions, Heidegger finds anxiety to be the most revealing of the ontological fabric of human being and its inherent call of conscience. The experience of anxiety signals a significant loss of meaning and stability in our lives. It arises when our daily progress is impeded, if not shattered to its very core, by occurrences (e.g., a serious illness) that disrupt our accustomed routines and relationships with things and with others, and that thereby expose us to the contingency and uncertainty inherent in our temporal existence. Anxiety focuses on this uncertainty. That is what makes the emotion so disquieting, dreadful, and distinctive. In anxiety we remain open to how the future orientation of existence works to call into question the orderliness of our everyday habits of living. Anxiety thus attunes us most directly to the deconstructive dimension of our temporal existence; it concentrates our attention on the way human being makes an issue of itself every second, minute, and hour of the day. In anxiety, what we are anxious in the face of is not merely the presence of some everyday occurrence raising havoc in our lives, but rather it is that primordial condition of existence—the temporal openness of our Being—that makes itself known by way of such an occurrence. This ever-present condition is the true source of anxiety.

For example, a person may feel anxious when suddenly stricken by a serious illness, but the experience of this emotion is possible only if the person cares enough about *what is to become* of his or her existence now that it is no longer what it used to be and perhaps may never be again. In anxiety, we stand face to face with the not yet of the future and thus with the uncertainty that accompanies this dimension of existence that is always ahead of itself. Or, as Heidegger would have it, "anxiety makes manifest in Dasein its Being towards its ownmost potentiality-for-Being," a potentiality "which it always is" and that is spoken of directly with the "saying" of the call of conscience.[30] Anxiety is consciousness in an unfettered state of acknowledgment: it opens us to and discloses the ethos of human being, our fundamental dwelling place on earth, with its openness to what is not yet, to the presence of a temporal process, an otherness that we did not create and that challenges us to assume the burden of freedom and resolute choice. Caught up in a state of anxiety, Augustine admits, "I am a burden to myself."[31] This

personal crisis calls on Augustine to take a stand and make a life-changing decision. He chooses God. "My entire hope is exclusively in your very great mercy. Grant what you command [acknowledgment], and command what you will."[32] God's supreme gift to us—acknowledgment—is existence, Being, and the cognitive and symbolic capacities that enable us to acknowledge, articulate, and live by the instructive truth of what is given here.

Perhaps. But such God-of-the-gaps thinking is too metaphysical for Heidegger's ontological concerns. Yes, it is the case that, phenomenologically speaking, there is a "givenness" (*es gibt*) to the Being of existence that comes before the calculative rationality of thought. Descartes got it wrong: "I think therefore I am" is off the mark. Rather, as witnessed in Augustine's memorable self-examination presented in the *Confessions*, the "I am" comes first. For Heidegger, Augustine got it right over twelve hundred years before the error was famously inscribed in the canon of Western philosophy. Heidegger, however, will not tread beyond the empirical givenness of Being, with its call of conscience. This call shows itself first and foremost as the "giving-to-understand" of our ownmost "potentiality-for-Being." The call of conscience is human existence disclosing itself to the one who is living it. This is what is "talked about" when conscience calls: the givenness, "the bare 'that it is,' " of one's Being. Or, as Heidegger also puts it, "In conscience Dasein calls itself."[33] It is a moment when truth is disclosed and authenticity is enacted.

As Heidegger continues to acknowledge the ontological workings of Being in his later philosophy, he makes much of how the demonstration of acknowledgment in the "poetry" of great works of art exemplifies how it is that language serves the call of Being in a most authentic way. In his essay "Holderlin and the Essence of Poetry," Heidegger writes, "Language has the task of making manifest in its work the existent, and of preserving it as such. In it, what is purest and what is most concealed, and likewise what is complex and ordinary, can be expressed in words. Even the essential word, if it is to be understood and so become a possession in common, must make itself ordinary."[34] Augustine, of course, finds this process taking place in its most miraculous and awesome form with "the Word made flesh" in the body of Christ: the incarnate Word. Heidegger does not choose to think about the matter in this way. He does, however, share with Augustine an interest in how language use facilitates the interpersonal process of helping others come to terms with the truth of what is. Here, too, the phenomenon of acknowledgment, aided by the capacity of rhetorical competence, plays a crucial role.

THE ORATOR'S ART AS AN ACT OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Acknowledgment and ethically oriented rhetoric go hand in hand. Such rhetoric is at work whenever language is being employed to *open* people to and have them acknowledge ideas, positions, and circumstances that, if rightly understood, stand a better than even chance of getting people to think and act wisely. Orators, be they good willed or not, are forever attempting to create these openings, for this is how they maximize the chance that the members of some audience will form some emotional attachment to and thereby take an interest in what the orator is attempting to acknowledge with his or her discourse. Neither persuasion nor collaborative deliberation can take place without the happening of this joint emotional endeavor. "We interest a man by dealing with his interests," writes Kenneth Burke.[35] This fact of life is emphasized throughout the Western rhetorical tradition. Knowing how to stir the soul rhetorically is essential because existential questions concerning the livelihood of a community are not usually decided with the equations of demonstration or the syllogisms of dialectic. Existence is a gamble based on probabilities, and the emotional outlook of the hoi polloi influences their judgment at the time the bet is placed. If rhetoric is to perform its most worthy function of trying to move people toward "the good," it must cast a concerned and knowing eye on the emotional character of those whom it wishes to move. A moving of the passions is a sine qua non of persuasion; truth alone is not sufficient to guide the thoughtful actions of human beings.[36]

Acknowledgment and rhetoric are bound together by human emotion. In his 1924 lecture course on Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and in the corresponding section of his *Being and Time*, Heidegger puts it this way: "the feeling of the one being addressed must be taken into account, as must the particular situation at the time and the speaker's own attunement to the issue at hand" (es muss bei der Vorgabe anderes in Hinsicht gestellt werden, es muss Rechnung getragen werden der Stimmung derkenigen, zu denen gesprochen wird, die jeweilige Lage der Dinge und die Art and Weise, wie man selbst zur Sachen steht), and "[the orator] must understand the possibilities of moods in order to rouse them and guide them in a right and just manner" (er bedarf des Verstandnisses der Moglichkeiten der Stimmung, um sie in der rechten Weise zu wecken und zu lenken).[37] The experience can be rewarding for all concerned. Acknowledgment is a life-giving gift. This point was made earlier when discussing how God, in the beginning, created the universe. One need not turn to God, however, to illustrate and verify

the point. Heidegger's phenomenology of religious experience, especially as it shows itself in Augustine's *Confessions*, is intended as a demonstration of this point. The "foundation" of religious life "rests in factical existence."[38]

What would life be like if no one acknowledged your existence? The question confronts one with the possibility of being isolated, marginalized, ignored, and forgotten by others. The unacknowledged find themselves in an "out-of-the-way" place where it is hard for human beings, given their social instinct, to feel at home. The suffering that can accompany this way of being-in-the-world is known to bring about fear, anxiety, sadness, anger, and sometimes even death in the form of suicide or retaliation against those who are rightly or wrongly accused of making one's life so lonely, miserable, and unbearable.

Acknowledgment provides an opening out of such a distressful situation, for the act of acknowledging is a communicative behavior that grants attention to others and thereby makes room for them in our lives. With this added living space comes the opportunity for a new beginning, a "second chance" whereby one might improve one's lot in life. There is hope to be found with this transformation of space and time as people of conscience opt to go out of their way to make us feel wanted and needed, to praise our presence and actions, and thus to acknowledge the worthiness of our existence. Offering positive acknowledgment is a moral thing to do.

Certain rituals of culture are meant to promote this endeavor. Proper decorum dictates, for example, that we say "hello" and "goodbye" to people so that they feel noticed, that we make them feel important and respected by simply holding open a door and saying "after you," or that we send them a birthday or condolence card to assure them that, at a moment of great joy or great distress, they are in our thoughts and perhaps our prayers. The presence of people in need of acknowledgment sounds a call of conscience. Good manners (not to mention a respect for humanity) encourage us to respond. Knowing, or at least believing, that this response truly "comes from the heart," others are likely to feel better than if they knew or believed that what they are receiving were mostly some ritualized behavior (mere recognition) steeped in the shallows of unthinking habit rather than in the depths of genuine care.

The "good" speaker is always seeking acknowledgment from some audience whose "good" members are also waiting for the speaker to acknowledge their interests in some meaningful way. Rhetorical competence has a significant role to play in providing dwelling places (openings) where some arguable truth *and* a life-giving gift can be offered to others. Rhetorical competence is

called for because, to repeat an earlier observation, "even the essential word, if it is to be understood and so become a possession in common, must make itself ordinary." The process presupposes that emotional bonds are forming among the speaker, the audience, and some matter of interest. Keeping in mind the necessity of establishing these bonds, the speaker must also struggle with the question of how to make the essential word ordinary without "dumbing down" its "true" meaning and concealing it. Acknowledgment, rhetoric, and emotion go hand in hand, but this last phenomenon can be employed by rhetoric primarily as a tool of entertainment and manipulation rather than as a necessary aid for revealing the truth.

Augustine's critique of the dominant school of rhetoric in his day—the Second Sophistic, in which he was trained—makes clear his awareness of the problem. Fourth-century Roman schools of rhetoric divorced the orator's art from philosophy and emphasized delivery, style, and ornamentation over substance. The practice of rhetoric thus became a form of public entertainment, an instrument for exciting and manipulating the emotions and distorting our God-informed will and its desire for knowing the truth.[39] Augustine identifies the source of the problem with the biblical fall of Adam and the everyday ways of civil society that have been paying the price ever since that awesome moment occurred. Separated from God, we have "disintegrated into multiplicity," into the masses of humankind, and thereby must form emotional bonds with others to create and maintain realms of social, political, and moral understanding and common sense.[40] Civility dictates as much, and Augustine acknowledges the importance of this activity. But he also sees in this dictatorship the happening of "sin" because of how its recommended habits, rules, routines, amusements, and ambitions can distract us from and make us forgetful of our most essential vocation: answering God's call.

Augustine knows rhetoric to be guilty of encouraging and sustaining this sin. Still, owing to the influence that Cicero's philosophy of rhetoric had on his thinking, Augustine acknowledges the saving grace of the orator's art. Cicero's "exhortation to study philosophy," writes Augustine, helped to change his life: "It gave me different values and priorities. Suddenly every vain hope became empty to me, and I longed for the immortality of wisdom with an incredible ardour in my heart."[41] Cicero's praise of philosophy as an invaluable source of truth for the orator's art directed Augustine toward its most metaphysical limits: God.

But Cicero also insisted that "we are not born for ourselves alone," that "our country claims a share of our being," and that if we intend "to

contribute to the general good," we must not disparage and retreat from the politics of public life but instead use "our skill, our industry, and our talents to cement human society more closely together, man to man."[42] The obligation stated here speaks to the importance of rhetoric. Philosophy is essential for the education of the orator, but it is the "art of eloquence" (*oratio*) practiced by this advocate of the *vita activa* that instructs one on how to equip (*ornare*) knowledge of a subject in such a way that it can assume a publicly accessible form and thus function effectively in the social and political arena. For the good of the community, philosophy and rhetoric must work together. Cicero—who admitted "that whatever ability I possess as an orator comes, not from the workshops of the rhetoricians, but from the spacious grounds of the Academy"—would have it no other way.[43] "To be drawn by study away from active life is contrary to moral duty."[44]

Being much less concerned with the social and political workings of the state than he was with the heavenly kingdom of God, Augustine stressed that he did not read Cicero "for a sharpening of [his] style . . . and literary expression." Rather, he "was impressed" by the author's "content": Cicero's instructions for getting at the truth of things as much as possible. Rhetoric at its best serves the truth, which for Augustine ultimately requires that we "leave earthly things and fly back to [God]."[45] Eloquence, however, is not to be forsaken, for it serves a valuable purpose in helping to establish a way for others to come to terms with the Almighty. Augustine puts it this way:

> Since infants are not taught to speak except by learning the expressions of speakers, why can men not be made eloquent, not by teaching them the rules of eloquence, but by having them read and hear the expressions of the eloquent and imitate them in so far as they are able to follow them? Have we not seen examples of this being done? For we know many men ignorant of the rules of eloquence who are more eloquent than many who have learned them; but we know of no one who is eloquent without having read or heard the disputations and sayings of the eloquent.[46]

In the same work, we also find Augustine making this related point:

> For since by means of the art of rhetoric both truth and falsehood are urged, who would dare to say that truth should stand in the person of its defenders unarmed against lying, so that they who wish to urge falsehoods may know how to make their listeners benevolent, or attentive, or docile in the presentation, while the defenders of truth are ignorant of that art? Should they speak briefly, clearly, and plausibly while the defenders of

> truth speak so that they tire their listeners, make themselves difficult to understand and what they have to say? Should they oppose the truth with fallacious arguments and assert falsehoods, while the defenders of truth have no ability either to defend the truth or to oppose the false? Should they, urging the minds of their listeners into error, ardently exhort them, moving them by speech so that they terrify, sadden, and exhilarate them, while the defenders of truth are sluggish, cold, and somnolent? Who is so foolish as to think this to be wisdom?[47]

Augustine, of course, is being rhetorical with the instructive questions that he asks here. Christianity needs the art of rhetoric to sustain and spread the Word, especially as this homiletic endeavor must take place before so many others whose discourse, although eloquent and entertaining, promotes misunderstandings and falsehoods about the true meaning of the Word. Augustine calls for eloquence to counter this ever-present danger and, in the process, to contribute to an "ecclesiastical literature" that can instruct readers about God's truth and the ways it is best spoken and practiced. God's Word lives with the help of acknowledgment, with the help of words expressed by "teachers" who remain open both to the Word's truth and to those who have yet to understand and appreciate this truth. "Clarity" of expression, which he understands to lie at the heart of such teaching, is especially important for Augustine. He counsels that anyone "who teaches should thus avoid all words which do not teach." So, for example,

> Good teachers have, or should have such a desire to teach that if a word in good Latin is necessarily ambiguous or obscure, the vulgar manner of speech is used so that ambiguity or obscurity may be avoided and the expression is not that of the learned but of the unlearned. . . . What profits correctness in a speech which is not followed by the listeners when . . . what is said is not understood by those on whose account we speak?[48]

It is important to note here that Augustine is not counseling teachers to give priority to style over correctness. Finding a fitting (eloquent) way of presenting God's Word to audiences characterized by various competing interests and cognitive abilities is a valuable means to a much greater end. Augustine writes, "This eloquence is that to be used in teaching, not that the listener may be pleased by what has horrified him, not that he may do what he has hesitated to do, but that he may be aware of that [truth] which lay hidden." The teacher's style must always be inclined to serve the greater good of helping people to "feast delightedly on this truth, for it is a mark of

good and distinguished minds to love the truth within words and not the words."[49] The authenticity of eloquence lies in its capacity to move people beyond *its perfect presentation of words* toward that which is perfect in the *highest* sense.

Augustine speaks to us of God. Heidegger's discourse is more empirically oriented and thus less ambitious. For him, it is "simply" a question of Being. In addressing this question, he suggests a necessary and positive role for rhetoric to play in disclosing the truth and creating genuine community, that is, a community dedicated to fostering collaborative deliberation among its members along with their commitment to justice. Although his assessment of the orator's art is rooted primarily in his reading of Aristotle—in fact, Heidegger pays no significant attention to Augustine's theory of rhetoric nor to its Ciceronian underpinnings—Augustine still influences Heidegger's consideration of the matter. It is Augustine who firsts alerts Heidegger to how the self's emotional involvement in everyday existence is a necessary condition for coming to know and communicate the truth to others. The insight is based on what Augustine reveals about the self's relationship to others as he narrates his story of "being concerned" (*curare*) with how he became a burden to himself. Implicated in this emotionally oriented state of concern are the workings of the intentional structure of consciousness.

Heidegger makes much of how the intentional structure of consciousness, its directionality, is not primarily a cognitive and theoretical operation geared to *knowing what* something is. Rather, the ontological workings of consciousness show themselves first and foremost as a precognitive relatedness to a world of existential concerns (for example, being able to fix breakfast without giving it much thought). Here consciousness works to attune us emotionally to our environment so that we can learn and demonstrate a competence in knowing how to deal with the immediacy of our everyday, goal-directed activities. Before it is employed reflectively to convert human understanding into the abstract and formal rules, logics, and laws of theoretical knowledge, with its penchant for *knowing what* something is, consciousness assumes the more primordial and performance-based function of facilitating a person's *knowing how* to get along successfully in everyday life.

The orator's art is a form of know-how that necessitates an understanding of the everyday world of know-how. A genuine enhancement of public opinion requires that the orator modify this world of the lived and attuned space of others by making present to them what the orator has reason to believe is true, just, and virtuous. The practice of rhetoric operates in the

immediacy of the present; it seeks thought and action in the pragmatic world of the here and now. Rhetoric calls upon emotion to facilitate this pragmatic endeavor. Heidegger recognizes the importance of this endeavor when he emphasizes that the emotional workings of rhetorical speech, unlike the purely "exhibiting" (*aufzeigen*) function of dialectic, are committed to the everyday world of practice and know-how wherein the "taking care of things" (*besorgen*) is worked out and accomplished and where rhetorical speech functions to exhort people to an active *krisis* or decision.[50] Like Augustine, Heidegger credits such speech with being more than a mere communicative device for the public's "idle chatter" (*gerede*). This affirmation is worth noting because of how Heidegger, like Augustine, can easily be read as one who holds the traditional philosophical bias against the "manipulative" nature of the orator's rhetorical competence.[51]

For example, in his description in *Being and Time* of how the "publicness" of our everyday way of being with others (the they) defines a world of "averageness," of common sense and common praxis, Heidegger tends to emphasize its propensity to bring about a mindless conformity in its adherents. "In this averageness with which [publicness] prescribes what can and may be ventured, it keeps watch over everything exceptional that thrusts itself to the fore. Every kind of priority gets noiselessly suppressed. Overnight, everything that is primordial gets glossed over as something that has long been well known. Everything gained by a struggle becomes just something to be manipulated."[52] Influenced by Augustine, Heidegger associates publicness with a "fallen" state of human being—a state in which the enactment of our authenticity goes no further than "just following the crowd," the "they."[53]

Perhaps those who have ever become dismayed over the thought and action of some collectivity may not find such a negative assessment of public life to be off the mark. But such an assessment defines only a part (albeit a large one) of what Heidegger is telling us about the everydayness of our being-with-others. For he also admits that publicness "*belongs to Dasein's positive constitution.*"[54] That is, owing to the traditions, customs, rules, and norms that inform its way of being, publicness provides a sense of order to what would otherwise be a state of chaos and confusion. The source of the intelligibility of the world is the average public practices through which alone there can be any understanding at all. Although such practices and the rhetoric that informs them can and often do provide a breeding ground for the evils of conformism, they nevertheless also provide the necessary background for coming to terms with who we are, first and foremost as social

beings, and for determining whether our extant ways of seeing, interpreting, and becoming involved with things and with others might be changed "for the better." Heidegger's positive take on the workings of this entire process is suggested when he notes how the understanding constituting the received opinion (*doxa*) of a given public "reveals authentic being-with-one-another in the world" (Die Doxa ist die eigentliche Entdecktheit des Miteinanderseins in der Welt).[55] Heidegger has in mind this state of authenticity when he writes that "only in communicating and struggling [with others] does the power of destiny become free."[56] Rhetoric, in short, helps to construct and cultivate on earth a dwelling place for authentic community.

Conclusion

The livelihood of this rhetorical and moral process is dependent on our capacity for acknowledgment, for creating openness to other things and other people. Such openness is at work when Augustine speaks to God about this specific matter, especially as it applies to understanding how Moses "perfectly perceived and had in mind all the truth we have been able to find in [the Bible], and all the truth that could be found in it which we have not been able, or have not as yet been able, to discover."[57] One particular (albeit lengthy) passage is worth quoting:

> May I hear and understand how in the beginning you made heaven and earth (Gen. I, I). Moses wrote this. . . . He is not now before me, but if he were, I would clasp him and ask him and through you beg him to explain to me the creation. I would concentrate [keep open] my bodily ears to hear the sounds breaking forth from his mouth. If he spoke Hebrew, he would in vain make an impact on my sense of hearing, for the sounds would not touch my mind at all. If he spoke Latin, I would know what he meant. Yet how would I know whether or not he was telling me the truth? If I did know this, I could not be sure of it from him. Within me, within the lodging of my thinking, there would speak a truth which is neither Hebrew nor Greek nor Latin nor any barbarian tongue and which uses neither mount nor tongue as instruments and utters no audible syllables [much like the prophetic voice that directed Socrates]. I would say: "What he is saying is true." And I being forthwith assured would say with confidence to the man possessed by you: "What you say is true."[58]

Augustine speaks to his readers about his speaking to God. For his own sake as well as for the sake of others, he struggles to come to terms with God, to understand the One who is the whole Truth and to convey

this understanding to others in a rhetorically effective manner. A situation robust with acknowledgment is at hand, a situation where the "speaking" that inspires Augustine's personal narrative "uses neither mount nor tongue as instruments and utters no audible syllables." Is this the same call, the "silent voice," that Heidegger hears and responds to in his lifelong struggle to answer the question regarding the meaning and truth of Being?

Without granting or denying anything about God, Heidegger knows the voice to be what, in fact, it is, empirically speaking: the call of Being. Answering this call makes possible the birth of such things as science, philosophy, art, and, to be sure, religion. The ontological structure of human being makes us receptive to acknowledging the objective uncertainty and the mystery that comes with the future-oriented openness of our existence. Where art thou? Here I am! Without the call of Being, what we call "God" would be a moot point. Heidegger's phenomenology of Augustine's religious experience is directed to showing why and how this is so.

Augustine admits that "the language" of God that inspires the Scriptures is "rich in meaning," allowing for a "diversity of true views." He also confesses, "I would not be using the language of my confessions if I fail to confess to you that I do not know" which of these views corresponds "supremely" (perfectly) "both to the light of truth and to the reader's spiritual profit."[59] Of course! The call of Being opens us to contingency and uncertainty. Biblical exegesis (hermeneutics) is a conversation that is never-ending for finite beings. Only faith gives us hope that the struggle is worth the effort.[60]

In his cautionary assessment of where humankind is headed in the ever-quickening contemporary world of technology, Heidegger is well known for suggesting that "only a god can still save us."[61] The god referred to here may be imagined as something that grants us some sign by way of the workings of Being. The sign will be seen and understood, however, only to the extent that we develop our capacity for acknowledging the presencing of all that lies before us. Scientific discovery, of course, is invaluable for meeting this challenge. The same can be said about philosophy, as well as the symbolic creation of great works of art. The rhetoric of Augustine's *Confessions* is considered by many to be a case in point. With the call of Being ringing in his ears, Heidegger admits as much. For, in this specific work, we find a story of acknowledgment and authenticity—of openness, responsiveness, responsibility, conscience, and resolute choice. These capacities come with the Being that we are but that is also more and thus other than us. We did not create the ontological structure of our spatial and temporal existence. What is the

otherness that is present here? Whatever it is, it awaits a response. Even the essential word, if it is to be understood and so become a possession in common, must make itself ordinary. Being calls for acknowledgment, and the rhetorical competence that can help us share this life-giving gift with others. Augustine would have us believe that it all begins with God. Heidegger directs us toward a phenomenological assessment of Being as a way to determine all that must be happening for such a belief to take form.

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3

Arendt and Saint Augustine

Identity Otherwise Than Convention

Ronald C. Arnett

The danger of thoughtless conformity in the social realm propelled Arendt's scholarly project. This is the reason Arendt's dissertation on Saint Augustine, published as *Love and Saint Augustine*, stressed the importance of "distance." Arendt continued this theme in multiple works, including *The Human Condition*, in which she argues that the social realm obliterates distance and differentiation between persons, yielding unreflective orthodoxy. Hannah Arendt's contribution to modernist criticism is extensive, reflected in the scholarship of Jürgen Habermas, Seyla Benhabib, and Judith Butler.[1] Arendt rejects modernist formulations of human self-understanding. She identifies three major missteps of modernity. The first is its promotion of a mythical form of inclusion that masks the reality of exclusion and creates a "parvenu" identity, as one consistently seeks admission to a social group that offers the possibility of inclusion that is repeatedly followed by rejection.[2] The second is its encouragement of a contentious view of tradition that leaves a person vulnerable to "existential homelessness" on the one hand and imposed meaning via colonialism and totalitarianism on the other hand.[3] The third is its glorification of the bureaucrat, whose primary interest is self-protection and promotion.[4] Arendt witnessed the aftermath of World War I—financial calamity between the wars and ideological hatred as a defining gesture of the developing World War II Germany. These events displayed modernity as an era defined as a "moral *cul de sac*."[5] Arendt's search for an alternative understanding of the human condition began with her dissertation on Augustine; this project was foundational for her lifelong political criticism of modernity.[6] Augustine's late Roman understanding of identity was otherwise than the convention of modernity. Augustine's

existential conception of identity informed Arendt's critical assessment of a modernist conception of the human condition.

This essay explores the communicative implications of the interplay of existence, communicative responsiveness, and a derivative self via Arendt's scholarly engagement with Augustine, whom she considered the first existentialist.[7] Arendt's interpretation of Augustine's existentialism develops in response to the growing Nazi movement and economic crisis in Germany. She wrote her dissertation in an era that demanded attentive and creative existential response.

This essay examines the implications of Arendt's assertions about Augustinian philosophy in a threefold fashion: (1) situating the historical moment of Arendt's intellectual formation, (2) outlining Arendt's discussion of *Love and Saint Augustine* as a public beginning of her deconstruction of modernity, and (3) framing the implications of Arendt's understanding of Augustine's "existential" understanding of a "derivative self" as fundamental for communicative responsiveness in a historical juncture defined by narrative and virtue contention.[8] Arendt's turn to a Catholic thinker, one embedded in a premodern perspective and arguably most responsible for the survival of institutional Catholicism, permitted her to offer a critical perspective on her own historical moment, framing an existential standpoint that attended to and responded to the fray of everyday life.[9]

SITUATING ARENDT'S AUGUSTINE PROJECT

Arendt wrote her dissertation on Augustine under the direction of Karl Jaspers, who understands the existential importance of Augustine's project.[10] Jaspers manifested a lifelong commitment to existentialism through his sweeping intellectual study of the history of ideas.[11] Of particular interest was Jaspers' writing on the modes of Augustine's thinking, which stressed Augustine's method of introspection and cited Augustine's confession: "I have become a question to myself."[12] This renowned "existentialist" quotation from Augustine was significant for both Arendt and Jaspers.

Arendt's intellectual preparation for writing on Augustine was shaped by her education in theology and philosophy. She studied with Martin Heidegger, whose lectures on Augustine were published in 1995 as *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*,[13] at a time when he was generating philosophical attention for *Being and Time*.[14] Arendt was, additionally, influenced in her theological understanding through Rudolf Bultmann, known for "demythologizing" the Bible.[15] Arendt brought an impressive educational pedigree

from the University of Marburg as she joined Karl Jaspers at Heidelberg University, where she met his version of *existenz* philosophy.[16]

As Arendt completed her dissertation in 1929, she united with a philosopher of social change, marrying her first husband, Günther Stern, who later changed his name to Günther Anders, with "Anders" emphasizing the notion of "different." Stern/Anders had already completed a Ph.D. in 1923, studying with both Heidegger and Husserl and completing his dissertation under Husserl. Anders was known for cultural criticism and a pessimistic assessment of the modern rendition of the human condition.[17] Interestingly, Anders was a cousin to Walter Benjamin, a well-known Jewish-German Marxist literary critic.

Arendt's scholarly life and first marriage made intellectual discussion about the crisis in Germany a daily habit. By November of 1923, inflation was out of control and at record levels; it took 4 trillion German marks to equal one U.S. dollar.[18] Images of wheelbarrows of money taken to the local food market defined daily life in Germany. In this economic chaos, Hitler attempted his famous march on Berlin with supposed support and agreement from the Kahr government, only to have Gustav von Kahr turn the government against the protesters. During this debacle, the thirty-five-year-old Hitler was wounded, convicted of treason, and sent to prison in 1924 for this failed revolutionary attempt, called the Beer Hall Putsch (Munich Putsch). He was sentenced to five years' incarceration, the minimum sentence for a conviction of treason. With the political winds in Germany quickly shifting, Hitler was given early release from prison in 1925. That same year, Hitler published the first volume of *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), *Eine Abrechnung* (translated as "The Settlement of an Accounts"); he published the second volume *Die Nationalsozialistische Bewegung* (translated as "The National Socialist Movement") in 1926.[19]

While Hitler was fomenting revolutionary Nazi activity, Gustav Stresemann (1878–1929), the chancellor and foreign minister of Germany's Weimar Republic, tried valiantly, and ultimately unsuccessfully, to stop the rapid march toward another war. Arendt, a student of existential thought, watched the Western world spinning out of control, with the death in 1929 of the German champion for peace, Stresemann, increasing economic chaos, the growing popularity of Hitler and *Mein Kampf*, and Mussolini's consolidation of power in Italy.[20] Arendt's intellectual and personal odyssey into the work of a late Roman thinker was accompanied by the reality of collapse in the West, seemingly akin to Augustine's writing during the demise of Rome (395–476).[21] In Augustine's responsiveness to

his own era, Arendt found insights from another moment of conceptual and everyday disruption.

Arendt attends to Augustine's rejection of the premise that a human being can stand above existence. One cannot tower above this existential human dwelling given to us by God; one must meet existence as a gift. The insights of Augustine and the emerging philosophies of phenomenology and existential phenomenology gave Arendt the intellectual tools for unmasking the limits of modernity. Optimistic confidence in modernity began to look like a Panglossian nightmare.[22] Arendt brings to the study of Augustine a hermeneutic perspective—existence, not optimism, is a fundamental shaper of the human condition.

Arendt's project of existential acknowledgment and response took her "to the things themselves,"[23] a lifelong commitment to existential attentiveness. Arendt's existentialism, like that of Augustine's *Confessions*, attends to the interplay of existence and human response. Existentialism embodies the meeting of existence and the necessity of responsiveness to that which one meets. Arendt emphasizes Augustine's stress on a human willfulness that meets life and then responds, without assuming that the goal is to command, own, or possess existence. One discovers identity in the communicative act of one response after another; one must meet existence and respond to events that transpire in the historical moment. The interplay of meeting existence and response situates existentialism outside both behaviorism and individualism. An existential conception of humanness is the resultant interaction of meeting an existential horizon and then engaging in communicative responsiveness, which continually reshapes human identity, giving rise to a derivative self. Existentially, what we call the identity of a derivative self is a continual reconstituting of the self, the consequence of the interplay of response and existence.[24]

Arendt follows the foundational question posed by Augustine, "What happens when one becomes a question unto oneself?"[25] This position, as stated earlier, unites Augustine's work with what we now label as existentialism. In the late fourth and early fifth centuries, Augustine understood that existence and response offer a derivative self that counters what has now been termed a reified self.[26] A derivative self, unlike the reified self, can never take existence or the necessity of response for granted.

Arendt's scholarly kinship with Augustine displays a practical definition of historicity, which is driven by questions that emerge in a particular moment.[27] What announces a historical moment is not facts but questions that demand response. Historicity, however, yields insight not from human

willfulness but rather from response to questions that are uniquely fundamental to a given context. Conversation across periods is possible when one discovers similar questions that emerged in quite different eras; attending to how persons in multiple historical moments responded to similar questions reveals historicity in action. The question that propelled both Augustine and Arendt is how to discern direction and identity in the midst of historical chaos and collapse. In the work of Arendt, we find historicity at work, linking the decline of Rome with the immoral madness of the World War II era.

Arendt understands Augustine as one of the most influential Western philosophers and theologians with an interest in the question of identity.[28] Her attentiveness to the question of identity continued long after her dissertation in 1929. Arendt's long and distinguished career explored questions of identity and the existential fact that we deny the "recalcitrance of existence"[29] at our own peril. Arendt's reading of Augustine recounts an existential fact—we can ignore neither the power of existence itself nor the necessity of human response.

Love and Saint Augustine, by Hannah Arendt

Arendt's dissertation and eventual book on Augustine bear witness to a late Roman religious scholar's testimony about the importance of attending to existence seriously and then offering a thoughtful response. Augustine's insights emerge through confession of the existential quandary of his own identity formation. Augustine provides existential insight about the reality of feeling lost in existence; he demonstrates the importance of practical responses to questions that arise in meeting existence. The self functions as a topographic indicator of the interplay between acknowledgment of existence and the act of response; as the meeting of existence and unique responses change and shift, the resultant maturing product is self-identity. When one is lost, questioning of the self becomes a confession that announces lack of direction. Arendt states:

> For the more he [Augustine] withdrew into himself and gathered his self from the dispersion and distraction of the world, the more he "became a question to himself" [*quaestio mihi factus sum*]. Hence, it is by no means a simple withdrawal into himself that Augustine opposes to the loss of self in dispersion and distraction, but rather a turning about of the question itself and the discovery that this self is even more impenetrable than the "hidden works of nature."[30]

Augustine's *quaestio* shapes Arendt's assertion that he is an existential thinker. The "self in question" emerges in moments of directionlessness, when existence no longer makes sense. In such junctures, identity is resituated and reshaped by absence that requires discovery of direction anew. Existentialism, for Arendt, includes a recognition of an existential homelessness of self, the necessity of the *quaestio*, an acknowledgment of the human's lack of control of existence, the recognition of the recalcitrance of existence, and the uniqueness of human response. Arendt understands that Augustine's version of existentialism was situated firmly within God's world. Arendt, of course, does not stress the God-centered nature of existence; she does, however, emphasize the importance of the interplay between existential situatedness and human responsiveness.

The self in question must meet existence on its own terms, including recognition of the first principle of negation, the existential reality of death. Arendt describes Augustine's view of love as dependent upon negation. For Augustine, self-love (which he situated in God) only emerges from the reality of negation, consisting of self-hate. Negation eclipses the originative understanding of the self and gives birth to a derivative self; for Augustine, this derivative self is discovered in response to God, after the "originative self" is utterly lost.[31] For Arendt, the derivative self emerges from existence itself, from the negativity of one's effort to impose oneself on existence; the failure of this effort makes possible a derivative self. Negation is the fighting back of existence that constitutes a demand that can reshape our identity through our responses.

Negation propelled Augustine's understanding of love of neighbor, understood as natural law written and manifested on the heart of a derivative self. Only this reconstituted or derivative self can love the neighbor as itself. Negativity counters the originative self, framing love of the neighbor from the standpoint of a derivative act. This assertion shaped Arendt's lifelong investigation of identity in response to three existential coordinates. First, negation of the self begins with questions about one's place in existence. Second, the derivative construction of the self emerges in response to existence, which continues to reframe identity. Third, existential life is transformed as one loves the neighbor as the derivative, not the originative, self.

Arendt's view of communicative agency stresses the embeddedness of human life. Like Voegelin and Burke, Augustine and Arendt emphasize the reality of the recalcitrance of human existence, which demands an authentic and unique response.[32] This view of human agency rejects a raw humanism

that rests within an originative I. Arendt's project, beginning with Augustine, does not commence with a conventional view of human agency at the epicenter; she begins with responsive attentiveness to existence that reconstitutes the self, resulting in awareness of one's obligation to the Other, the neighbor. Arendt offers a critical reaction to modernity's view of an originative self. Her insights have explanatory power—existence demands a response that yields a derivative self. Arendt attends to Augustine's stress on craving or desire, *appetitus*, that existentially gets the attention of the originative I, making a "derivative I" possible.[33]

Appetitus

Augustine's articulation of a derivative self, engaged in love of the neighbor, announces the fundamental importance of sociality and alterity. Love is *craving* for an object of desire that cannot be obtained; craving results in one's attending to alterity, the uniqueness of the Other. If one actually secures an object of desire, the action moves from desire to possession, losing love of the neighbor and alterity. Ironically, possession generates the fear of loss. One becomes fearful of losing what is temporally possessed. The derivative self counters this improper view of ownership with love that embraces desire without demand for possession. The fear of loss is fueled by an uncertain future and the demand for continuing possession. Only love for the self and the Other via a derivative self, lived out within what Augustine terms an eternal present, offers a dwelling, a place of habituation, that eclipses the fear of loss. An originative self is mistakenly propelled by a fragile love tied to a world of possession. Augustine called this improper form of love that consistently invites fear of loss *cupiditas*. Augustine contrasted this incorrect love that demands possession and results in fear of loss with a right form of love, *caritas*. For Augustine, the "root of all evils is *cupiditas*, the root of all good is *caritas*."[34] Both caritas and cupiditas share a craving desire of *appetitus*. Danger does not arise in desire but from the propeller of desire, the originative self. Augustine defined cupiditas as a love manifested in the act of possession and caritas as an impersonal caring situated within faith; there is a phenomenological world of difference between cupiditas and caritas.[35]

Arendt asserts that Augustine leaves us with desire or craving as an ontological reality of humanness that unites both cupiditas and caritas. Divergence between these two views of love rests in the agency that actually guides the desire. The agency of an originative I or a derivative I reveals the contrast between possession and alterity, respectively. For Augustine, the

eternal present is a dwelling for a derivative self, a self no longer controlled by possession and fear of loss.

Augustine, as understood by Arendt, reminds us that craving or desire cannot be ignored; we are creatures of unceasing appetite. Neither Augustine nor Arendt would pause in wonder about the bloody march of struggle and war that has characterized the West. The existential reality of humanness emanates from desire. Arendt follows Augustine's lead, recognizing that a communicative agent must decide how to implement desire. The choice between cupiditas (i.e., possession) and caritas (i.e., alterity) gives rise to contrasting existential realities.

An Existential Fork in the Road

Augustine assumes that the reality of choice alters human identity as we respond to human existence. Both acts of desire, caritas and cupiditas, are given life through choice; we are not bound to one or the other. Humans dwell within an existential reality of choice. Augustine states, however, that one misses happiness whenever one takes sole aim at oneself; choosing cupiditas results in being enslaved or imprisoned by the fear of loss. Only existential death of the originative self can eradicate such enslavement. After the death of an originative self, the derivative self can offer responses that invoke the experience of happiness by keeping one's focus of attention on the eternal present.

Augustine frames existence as founded on a future that incorporates the past into an eternal present—"a present time about things past, a present time about things present, [and] a present time about things future."[36] Desire or craving of cupiditas keeps the focus on the future and obliterates the past, making us *forget*.[37] Augustine asserts that the natural act of the human is not to remember but to lean toward a future. Craving or desire results in forgetfulness. "Since craving is the basic mode of human existence, men always 'forget over something,' namely, over whatever they happen to desire. Desire itself is a state of forgetfulness."[38] Desire is human *hope* in action, and caritas permits the human to transcend the originative self, moving the person into a different time dimension.[39] Augustine views Being and time as opposites, in that one can only truly *be* when one transcends temporality and forgetfulness and focuses upon the ongoing eternal present.[40] Caritas dwells within an eternal present.

Augustine's existential engagement moves the conversation from the future and from the past to a unique sense of the present, an ongoing

present that opens a phenomenological entrance into eternity. Attentiveness to the eternal present unites one with existence that displaces an originative self from the center, with caritas functioning as a guiding, principal force, a fulcrum that permits the reality of "transcending" and "forgetting," offering a life governed "for the sake of" something other than oneself.[41] Caritas and cupiditas represent an existential fork in the road, providing contrasting perceptual and temporal mediations of human action. These two mediators function as dissimilar moral fulcrums leading to contrasting communicative practices.

Communicative Practices

Cupiditas is love that seeks self-definition through possession; caritas, in contrast, moves the derivative self to fearlessness. Caritas, for Augustine, is a "right love," which permits the derivative self to take literally the commandment "to love thy neighbor as thyself."[42] With the derivative self in place, Augustine then offers an interesting twist to his story of rightly ordered participation in existence; as stated above, Augustine conceptualizes a well-ordered love that makes one fearless, able to "love thine enemies" without losing oneself. Four essential communicative practices emerge out of caritas that keep one's focus on existence instead of on a self that demands possession.

Love of . . .

The dividing line between love guided by caritas and love propelled by cupiditas is the derivative self's love of neighbor and the originative self's desire for possession, respectively. Rightly ordered love makes possible an *impersonal love* that loves all—friend and foe.[43]

An impersonal view of love rejects individual possession and a self-focus. It is ironic that deep caring for another requires an impersonal view of love. Otherwise, we miss the genuine uniqueness of the Other, moving from alterity to possession, seeking to turn the Other into the Same. The practice of impersonal love of caritas keeps the focus off oneself and counteracts the manic need to possess the Other. Augustine's emphasis on impersonal attentiveness to the Other is at the center of the thought of two major ethicists: Immanuel Kant of the eighteenth century and Emmanuel Levinas of the twentieth century.[44] Augustine's insights have endured, pointing to an alterity attentive to the Other that is void of a possessive grasp of another's uniqueness.

Memory

For Augustine, caritas shapes memory through disruption—moving the past phenomenologically into the present, an eternal present.[45] Augustine's conception of memory is *a priori* to the birth of a person and begins with the Creator. The practice of memory works in a threefold fashion: remembrance, recollection, and confession. Remembrance attends to "the absolute future [which] turns out to be the ultimate past."[46] One remembers the Creator who gave birth to an immemorial sense of time that attends to the eternal. Recollection is a "return to oneself," a revisiting of the self differently, derivative from the Creator and existence.[47] Augustine's recollection assumes that we are thrown back to the very source of being. Death is the ultimate moment of recollection, a returning to the source of being. Confession is an ongoing acknowledgment of our reconnection to the source of being that depends upon recollecting the self and a remembrance of the a priori; this final element of memory confesses the origin of life in the eternal present.

This threefold view of memory (remembrance, recollection, and confession) constitutes an a priori narrative that recollects the self in the present while recognizing a primordial past that leads to a confession about the unity of future and past within the eternal present. Augustine points to this a priori reality that actively gives meaning within existence. Confession is the ultimate practice of memory that unites a person with an eternal present. Augustine's immemorial insight is consistent with Levinas' primordial emphasis on an ethical echo, "I am my brother's keeper."[48] Both Levinas and Augustine understand the immemorial as a dwelling open to anyone attentive to a spiritual awakening that then redefines the self as a derivative I. Augustine stresses the importance of an existential awakening that turns the self toward an immemorial demand to attend to the Other.

Conscience and Free Will

Augustine understands conscience as developed through the practice of a textured reading of a given event or activity. Practices require thoughtfulness; they are not to be confused with thoughtless routine. Arendt's book on Adolf Eichmann places "thoughtlessness" as a "banality of evil" within modernity. Her caricature of thoughtless routine is presented in the form of the bureaucrat.[49] Practice, for Augustine, is contrary to thoughtless custom, which he calls a "habit." The thoughtlessness of habit results in unreflective

sin; only the action of caritas makes possible the practicing of choice tied to free will. For Augustine, practice shuns the habit of thoughtlessness, enacting a conscience, which attends to God and his world.[50] Conscience requires an active free will composed of thoughtfulness that considers natural law and reinforces a turn to the Creator.[51] Conscience requires memory, love, and a derivative self, shaped by the Augustinian conception of free will, which consists of direction generated by conscience toward natural law and God's world.

Thematic consistency guides Arendt's understanding of Augustine's free will; Arendt argues that free will is necessary in the construction of human identity after the discovery of a derivative self, which is connected to a primordial origin narrative. Free will engenders thoughtful action that escapes the danger of habit and routine. The I that loves the neighbor through free will emerges from a derivative self that has answered the call of existence. The derivative self can respond and act through free will guided by a conscience that knows this is God's world.

This conception of free will assumes a spiritual awakening to one's obligation to the existence in which a new self is brought into action. This new self is held "hostage" by the Other, in the words of Levinas.[52] It is the new self that then engages free will with a conscience that seeks to figure out what particular "right" action is necessary. Augustine reminds us of the importance of thoughtful practice as Levinas stresses the absolute need for education. The human must discern what is best in the particular, exercising a unique form of free will.

Love of Neighbor

The final practice is a fitting love of the neighbor that requires the mediator of caritas. Love of the neighbor is the culmination of the practices of love, memory, conscience, and free will. Love of neighbor is a practice that only makes sense, for Augustine, after all the other practices are in place. A derivative I finds sustenance in and through caritas and engages in a unity of contraries that results in excising the demand that existence abide by one's expectations as one seeks to possess, turning the Other into the Same.

Augustine repeatedly stresses that love of neighbor must be "impersonal," leaving oneself in solitude even when one is with the neighbor. Love rightly ordered is an impersonal love that attends to the Other without losing a primary attachment to the Creator. This impersonal love opens the world to all, announcing its obligations and joy and making a "social life"

constructively possible. Belief in the a priori origins of life unites one with an immemorial past and a future, giving rise to the eternal present that makes social life possible without exploiting the Other for personal gain.

The impersonal connection to the neighbor suggests a particular view of sociality, one void of the desire to possess the Other and attend only to one, the self. This position on sociality is akin to Levinas' contention that the neighbor is central to justice, in that one must attend to the neighbor—the one not at the table but unseen and afar. The terms "justice," "the impersonal," and "the neighbor" reflect an existential engagement with social commitments that are larger than one's own personal expectations. Arendt and Kant used the notion of an "enlarged mentality" to stress the essential importance of a world beyond one's own personal wishes.[53] The central feature of this form of justice is that one need not have relational ties to receive its power.

The insights of Arendt, Kant, and Levinas are in kinship with Augustine's understanding of rightly ordered social life as impersonal, standing in isolation before God, recognizing that "bodily eyes" cannot see equality.[54] Augustine distinguished between a world of misplaced desire and an immemorial connection to the Creator by attending to existence without the objective of possession. The community of believers sustains itself with impersonal care for one another and ongoing commitment to the Creator. Arendt's conception of Augustine takes us into a world otherwise than convention, otherwise than common practices, otherwise than the originative starting place of the self. Arendt's reading of Augustine emphasizes the impersonal, the indirect, the derivative, the uniqueness of the Other, and the power of an eternal present that unites a past narrative with the future. Arendt stresses that we are not makers of our own destinies but responders to existence, forever reshaping who we are becoming in the practice of caritas.

Philosophy of Communication: Otherwise Than Convention

Repeatedly, I have tried to illustrate the contemporaneity of Augustine's insights with allusions to Levinas as I attended to Arendt's reading of Augustine. In this final section, I place Arendt's reading of Augustine in more direct conversation with Levinas and add another philosophy of communication companion, Martin Buber. Arendt's work, like that of Buber and Levinas, was "otherwise than convention,"[55] with each engaged in a lifelong struggle against the major precepts of modernity: "efficiency, progress, and

individual autonomy."[56] Her contentious response to modernity illuminates the "why" of her interest in the late Roman scholar and religious figure, Augustine. Arendt, like Buber and Levinas, offers insights that were otherwise than the convention of modernity.

Buber's notion of the "between" and Levinas' emphasis on ethics as "first principle" function as alternatives to modernity's stress on individual autonomy and an emphasis on the originative I of the West. Buber reminds us of the relationally revelatory ontological space of the "between."[57] Levinas points to an immemorial and continually articulated voice that commands us to attend to and care for Others. Their insights complement Arendt's reading of Augustine as a counter to the mistaken conception of the human condition propelled by an originative self.

Arendt stresses Augustine's emphasis of *existentialism* (acknowledgment of the recalcitrance of existence coupled with uniqueness of response) and the ongoing construction of a derivative self. Arendt's interest is akin to Buber's existential attentiveness to the signs of existence and the importance of human response guiding his philosophical anthropology.[58] Levinas' project revolved around the notion of a derivative I. I outlined the importance of this conception in "A Dialogic Ethic: 'Between' Buber and Levinas."[59] Listening to and responding to an ethical echo shapes a derivative I via response to existence. Arendt's reading of Augustine reminds us that existence matters. The derivative I finds identity constituted by an existential meeting of life on its own terms that calls forth a particular and unique response.

Arendt outlines Augustine's originative existential point that is otherwise than convention as she stresses his statement: " 'I have become a question to myself.' "[60] This existential question emerges when a meaningful participation in the world around one is not clear and one cannot find direction. Existentialism, as an area of study, arose before and immediately after the World War II era as many acknowledged a lack of direction. Augustine, from the late fourth and early fifth centuries, offered a confession that recognized directionlessness and the importance of a response situated within a Christian sense of personhood. Augustine's insights emanate from the narrative soil of a Catholic Christian faith and a cosmopolitan grappling with the insights of Greek philosophy. Arendt, Buber, and Levinas continue their conversation in a cosmopolitan fashion, announcing the pragmatism of engaging existence otherwise than the convention of modernity. One cannot ignore existence when direction is lost. Arendt's turn to Augustine makes both conceptual and pragmatic sense; the two come together under

the same concern, the collapse of everyday life—Augustine witnessed the Roman Empire in shambles, and Arendt witnessed the decline of the West with a war motivated by the power of hate and exclusion. My own interest in the work of Buber and Levinas rests with their responses to modernity's shattering narrative. They are in step with Arendt's version of Augustine; all point to existence that demands that we pay attention, think, and respond outside the scope of convention.

The philosophy of communication implications of Arendt's insights on Augustine are threefold: (1) warning about communicative imposition upon another; (2) stressing the importance of self-talk before, during, and after public utterance; and (3) emphasizing the existential reality of interruptions.

Otherwise Than Imposition on Existence

This derivative I suggests a particular account of autoethnographic inquiry. Existentially, one must have the courage to recognize negation, death, and darkness in order to produce a unique response that might offer greater insight and illumination.

Augustine does not write to explain his subjective view of the truth; rather, he writes to discern a way to participate in existence that dwelled within a larger truth that he could not fully grasp. Augustine understands the task of a person trying to figure out how to navigate existence before God.[61] Augustine meets God's existence without imposing a thoughtless reading upon existence; instead, he contends against unreflective, thoughtless habits that make us inattentive to the uniqueness of existence.

Arendt offers a textured view of Augustine's ethnographic and autoethnographic inquiry, framing the differences between a personal subjective journal and a thoughtful autoethnographic inquiry. One finds this difference central to Clifford Geertz's discussion of "experience-near" and "experience-distant."[62] The eyes of a local and a guest offer different conceptions of distance, permitting one to perceive and comprehend in diverse ways.[63] Augustine's autoethnographic confession announces the move from "concepts near" and an originative I to "concepts far" and the derivative I. Augustine understands the necessity of distance in order to "see."

From the philosophy of communication insights of Buber and Levinas, we also find a similar understanding. Buber stresses distance as fundamental to the invitation of dialogue. In *Between Man and Man*, Buber reminds us of the danger of imposition upon another.[64] Levinas' work makes no sense without a conception of distance. Otherwise, the "saying" becomes

the "said," "infinity" falls into the abyss of "totality," and "alterity" becomes the "Same." The richness of their work assumes the necessity of distance; hegemony lives when "this" becomes simply "that." Augustine's derivative self, shaped by distance and responsiveness, continually learns and changes, ever transformed by existence. Such learning yields a rich interior communicative life of existential self-talk.

Existential Self-Talk

Augustine's confessions align with Arendt's own work as she emphasizes the importance of following "trains of thought."[65] Existence is a laboratory for responsive thinking. Augustine's *Confessions* offer insight into the interplay of thinking and existence, attending to existence as both a field of experience and a teacher. We witness in the *Confessions* an existentially responsive thinking that is in contrast to the modern effort to walk above the fray of everyday life, an approach that blatantly refuses to let the world educate and inform. Augustine and Arendt reveal the importance of existentially responsive thinking that is contrary to the modern dismissive gesture toward existence. They begin with existential self-talk that assists as one stumbles through demanding experiences in human existence. Augustine and Arendt were persons of existential discernment, willing to meet life before it made sense; they had the patience to be taught by existence. When existence does not conform to our expectations or demands, we repetitively utter, "How can this be?" "How could this happen?" "How is this possible?" Such a moment of existential interruption demands that one enter conversation with existence—practicing existentially responsive self-talk. It is this responsive communicative act that permits a derivative I to learn continually from existence.

The heart of existential self-talk is a basic fact: Life does not always adhere to our own demands. The novels of Albert Camus (1913–1960) are exemplars of existential self-talk. Briefly, I turn to Camus' description of existential self-talk, even as he and a number of his existential contemporaries refused association with the term.[66] Camus' characters display existential responses in action, revealing how we are thrown back upon existence itself; we must learn from existence or suffer consequences that disrupt us. The existential clarity of this position is displayed in the final page of Camus' *The Stranger*.[67] The main character, Meursault, after committing a murder, being imprisoned for eleven months, and sitting on death row, finally gives up on the possibility of optimism; his existential self-talk finally admits the reality

of raw concrete existence. Meursault finds himself with no comfort from a theory, an idea, or a future project; he is left with the reality of the power of existence pressing down on him. There is no hint of optimism in his own expectations; no longer can he hide from existence as he projects a better future. Existence has claimed the novel's main character; at this juncture, Meursault recognizes that existence is talking to him, announcing over and over that life around him cannot be ignored forever. He loses his optimism just as he recognizes that existence demands to be acknowledged; existence becomes a conversational partner, but Meursault does not respond.

The final lines of the novel echo this realization and underline a particular existential loss of self-centered optimism: "It was as if that great rush of anger has washed me clean, emptied me of hope [better understood as optimism], and gazing up at the dark sky spangled with its sign and stars, for the first time, the first, I laid my heart open to the benign indifference of the universe."[68] Meursault opens himself to indifference that, once accepted, offers him an odd sense of comfort. He misses, however, what Augustine knows to be the fundamental importance of the derivative I, which requires one to meet existence as a conversational partner. Genuine hope rests with the derivative I, which understands that conversation with existence is demanded; in Augustinian language, God's creation matters. Meursault dies with an existential recognition—finally, his self-talk begins with existence, but his lack of response makes a derivative I inconceivable. This realization comes too late for him, but not for all those wanting to challenge the thoughtless optimism of modernity.

Existential Interruptions

Arendt reads Augustine as stressing a view of existence that is contrary to indifference, pointing to interruption as an opportunity to learn from existential revelation. Existence speaks, and we are invited and sometimes commanded to enter the conversation. Existential interruptions and conversations assist in lighting the path before us; such conversation and action are responsive to existence, not the anguish of the fear of loss.

Arendt points to an image of a human communicator seeking to discern a path in the act of responding to existence. Existential interruptions jolt an originative I, making possible a derivative I that can learn from existence, no longer lost in lament and anger when life loses its sensibility and does not conform to our wishes. Arendt's view of Augustine pragmatically accepts existence as a primordial shaper of the self, pointing to a phenomenological

fact—we are composed of derivatively constructed selves. Understanding that we tread upon a path without clarity announces with definitiveness that communicative life "is never unenvironed."[69] At moments defined by obscurity and the unknown, the environment's seminal impact upon the self is unavoidable, constituting the derivative nature of the self and providing opportunity for response. One must engage existence impersonally or open oneself to the life of the *parvenu*, or what Arendt calls the manic mistake of American culture, the desire to belong without necessary self-talk about the value and worth of a given association.[70] Acknowledgment of and response to an existential interruption offer communicative practices that nourish a dwelling of hope.

The interruptions of existence make us attend to the temporal nature of existence, taking us off mere autopilot. The derivative self engages life with existential responsibility attentive to the temporal nature of human life. Augustine frames the fundamental defining conditions of humanness as temporality. "All worldly goods are changeable (*mutabilia*). Since they will not last, they do not really exist. . . . But even if things should last human life does not."[71] Arendt follows Augustine's lead, engaging existence through the lens of temporality, announcing the existential nature of the drama that shapes each of us within the human condition.

The interplay of existence, interruptions, and the temporality of communicative responsiveness shape the ongoing construction of a derivative self and suggest that only through the reality of existential interruption and response does one find a genuine identity. Arendt's Augustine outlines the necessity of acknowledgment of and responsiveness to existence, cautioning us to be wary of undue clarity, thoughtless routine, and mindless direction.

Augustine announces the normative reality of existential interruption in human existence. He calls us to attend to how existence puts the identity of the I into question. In the meeting of human existence and its disruptive character, one begins to question oneself as one's sense of identity moves in response to genuine existential demands. As we meet existence in a seemingly never-ending process of disruption, our identity shifts, with our routine expectations often dwarfed by the changes around us. Augustine describes how existence provides a learning laboratory that requires response.

We are derivative creatures that must be responsive to creation. We are unable to control all events, but we must respond. We find, in the writings of Augustine, an image of a farmer, dependent on the conditions of weather that necessitate response while tilling the soil, ever required to meet unexpected weather changes. The reality of a farmer's life demands

attentiveness to existence and constant response. It is not possible to wish away all weather that is inhospitable to the crops in the field. Unlike the practical life of a small farmer, we, in modernity, do not want to give existence its rightful due. Yet, the power of existence announces itself each day with its caricature performance in the form of the grim reaper. Ask anyone who has experienced the sudden death of a loved one: death makes the power of existence known and undeniable. Interruptions from existence, coupled with our responses, shape what we become; existential interruptions constitute our derivative identity.

Arendt's dissertation reminds us of the interruption of otherness that begins with existence and the influence of the Other. Arendt takes us to the power of existence that includes not only me but "the third," the "neighbor," the one not directly in the conversation. The breadth of this approach acknowledges and underpins the scholarship of philosophy of communication offered by authors from Bakhtin to Buber to Levinas.[72] Augustine foreshadows the postmodern critique of agency; one finds much agreement with postmodern writers who reject a humanism that imposes the communication of an originative I upon the neighbor. The impersonal interruption of existence and the welfare of the unknown and unseen neighbor remind us of the importance of those unable to join us at the table of conversation. The impersonal makes a place for the third. This position guides the work of Levinas and makes his conception of justice possible.[73] And, for Buber, the ontological reality of the "between" offers a dwelling for a construct that is not actually me or the Other but a shared conversational space.[74]

Philosophers of communication who do not begin with an "individualistic I" of the West recognize that Arendt's version of Augustine details a derivative I who responds to an immemorial past and recasts the present. Self-talk emerges in response to the interruptions of existence and the knowledge that one cannot simply impose demands upon existence. We are not in command of the starship *Enterprise* and cannot give the orders of Captain Picard, demanding that existence "make it so." Without a willingness to give up the originative self for a derivative self that acknowledges and responds to existence, we are left with the manic need to impose ourselves on existence and others.

Arendt's reading of Augustine leaves us with a fundamental practice for philosophy of communication—beware of existential arrogance. Otherwise, we assume the role of Frazier in B. F. Skinner's *Walden Two*, who yells at the top of his lungs in frustration at people not doing what he thinks they should in an experiment—"Behave, damn you, behave as you ought!"[75] We

follow suit as we ignore existence itself—unwilling to learn and respond to the uniqueness of a given moment. We enact a self-directed sophistry that caresses our own ears. We remain communicatively unresponsive to existence, lost in an originative I that seeks to tell and impose.

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Lyotard's Augustine

David J. Depew

Jean-François Lyotard's *The Confession of Augustine* derives from lectures given at philosophy conferences in 1997. When he died in April 1998, the text remained unrevised and incomplete. Nonetheless it was almost immediately published and translated.[1] In spite of these complications, the main points of Lyotard's essay can be summarized fairly economically. Once I have done so, I will turn to what is novel about his interpretation of *Confessions* and how, in its novelty, Lyotard was intervening in ongoing philosophical discussions about the constitution of our consciousness of time, a key issue in twentieth-century European philosophy. I then consider how this late text relates to the main themes of Lyotard's philosophizing. I end by suggesting why it was not odd for a secular intellectual of the radical left to think well of Europe's most seminal conservative theologian, and what the significance of their encounter might be for students of communication processes.

What Lyotard Says about Augustine's *Confessions*

Inspection of our experience, Lyotard reports Augustine saying, shows that there is for us no presentation of the present, no now. We are strung out (*distentio animi*) between past and future.[2] This is in fact a defining character of our life. "Distentio est vita mea," says Augustine.[3] The reason lies in the overwhelming power of desire (*concupiscentia*). Driven as we are since infancy by the urge for domination (*libido dominationis*), desire is constitutive of our experience itself: sexually cathected, endlessly bent toward pleasurable satisfaction (*delectatio*), and no less endlessly frustrated. By the time you realize

you are under the control of a concupiscent desire, it is already too late. The deed is done, providing fuel for remorse. Just as often it is undone, fanning the flames of regret. As to improving ourselves, we are all masters of delay. We fantasize, as already accomplished, decisions that remain undecided and deeds that remain undone. We constantly temporize. Our consciousness is written in the future anterior tense.[4]

It follows, Lyotard argues, that we cannot predictively say of a temptation, "I will be able to ward this off." Neither are we in a position to predict, "I will *not* be able to ward off this" or even in retrospect to say "I was unable to ward it off," both of which presume that it might have been otherwise. We can only say, "I will have been able to do nothing to ward off the rout."[5] "This future anterior," Lyotard writes, "sets the future upon a powerlessness that is already accomplished."[6] We are always already taken unaware, whether by lust, ambition, or even, as we clamber up Augustine's ladder of loves, attachment to God.[7] "The clear phenomenology of internal temporality," Lyotard summarizes, "covers over a strange mechanism, a grammar of the ways in which concupiscence conjugates essential frustration."[8]

To see what Lyotard philosophically makes of these recognitions, we might begin by recalling what Augustine himself, or at least Augustine as speaker of his *Confessions*, makes of them. Augustine's *conversio*, his turning of his soul from the things that are outside to the spacious fields of "*memoria*" within—which in the last books of *Confessions* yields the first phenomenological description of mental acts in the history of philosophy and in doing so grasps their temporal character—changes the affective situation for the better. There are, Augustine reports, "three activities in the mind, anticipating, observing, and remembering."[9] Scrutinizing how these are interrelated, we see that "a long future time is not really in the future but is a present anticipation in the mind of a long time and that a long past time is not really in the past, which is no more, but is a present memory of a long time in the mind."[10] Yet we are too "disarticulated [*dissilui*] into time" to actually experience this rich present as it whizzes by.[11] We can experience ourselves as missing the presence of the present, and desiring it, but not much more.

Augustine remarks that this limitation makes questions about what God was thinking or doing before he created the universe as ill formed as they are inevitable for people who are distracted by and dispersed among external things.[12] For God, everything is eternally copresent in all its fullness and dimensionality.[13] Still, reflective disengagement from outer things

raises in Augustine a hope that, in spite of the dispersion into time that circumscribes the human condition, he might catch glimpses of God's eternal present and, in so doing, experience a delight that does not cloy, even if it is impossible to sustain. What drama there is in Augustine's *Confessions* springs from this possibility, desire, and hope. The basic plot is that having recovered, with help from Ambrose's version of Neoplatonism, from philosophical and religious views that are too materialistic to permit reflective disengagement from external things, Augustine gets a taste of the eternal present of God, but only actually experiences it when he returns to the religion of his mother. It is not coincidental that he is with his mother in the port city of Ostia when his experience of God is at its ecstatic best.

Lyotard, for his part, does not linger on this well-known climax. Noting that Augustine says little about "his [subsequent] return to Africa; the community at Thagaste; then, at Hippo; nothing about his hard Episcopal life; hardly a mention of him renouncing the life of a hermit," Lyotard focuses instead on whatever passages there are in which we get glimpses of a man who had been forced by a mob to become a busy—indeed busybody—bishop.[14] Augustine records the constant upsurge of the same old impulses, the same old girlfriends, the same old egocentricity, the same old Adam. Desire still takes him unaware. Lyotard notices Augustine's observation that during a moment of prayer "when I was delighting in your presence," he felt even "more in dissociation with himself, cleaved, alienated, uncertain of what he is than usual."[15] The act of confessing does not "remove the creature from the hurried, limp course of regrets, remorse, hope, responsibilities, or from the ordinary worries of life."[16] Conversion, it seems, "exempts him from nothing."[17]

I suspect Lyotard is interested in the persistence of these failings because he thinks that Augustine's moments of transcendence are illusory. Leave intact Augustine's desire-wracked picture of consciousness and (with a little help from Jacques Lacan, who was at one point Lyotard's mentor) subtract as fantasy the idea that Augustine's striving toward the eternal copresence of things in God's mind makes contact with the Real, and you will have a pretty good phenomenology of the temporal structure of our experience. In fact, Lyotard claims, you will have a better account of it than you will find in the succession of twentieth century philosophers who get it wrong to the extent that they leave out or underestimate the power of desire in structuring our temporally distended life. To their views, accordingly, we turn next.

A Brief History of (the Phenomenology of) Time Consciousness

The received philosophical idea of time goes back to Aristotle. Time measures the motion of external objects.[18] We get our idea of time by inductively picking it up from our experience of moving bodies. Hence time mirrors, as well as measures, actual motion. This account, a version of which Augustine refutes in *Confessions*, spatializes time; in characterizing this inadequate conception, Augustine speaks of a *spatium temporis* and a *status tempore* through which externally extended substantial objects move, as countable moments tick by at a steady rate.[19] Modern philosophers such as Descartes, Locke, and Hume assume this conception of time but also assume that we are immediately and indubitably in contact only with our own stream of consciousness. What is going on in what we revealingly call "the outside world" is a matter of inference. The thought occurs to them, accordingly, that our sense of inner time might not reliably track the motion of objects as they move through spatialized time.[20] To be sure, the machines we make, since they obey the laws of physics rather than the laws of psychology, may be running along coherently enough in objective time. But the flow of our subjective experience might be a jumbled flux and flutter of the sort described by the eighteenth-century novelist Lawrence Sterne and subsequently explored in detail by a series of psychological novelists culminating in James Joyce, Marcel Proust, and Virginia Woolf. It is not irrelevant that Sterne was riffing on Locke or that Woolf's father, Leslie Stephen, was a scholar and enthusiast of Hume.

Edmund Husserl, the father of phenomenology, undid these prejudices by describing what time consciousness looks like when attributions of existence and causation, and with them skeptical worries, are suspended. It looks, he concludes, a lot like Augustine says it looks, whose inner turn to *memoria* anticipates Husserl's phenomenological reduction. Indeed, Lyotard says that Husserl merely "reads off the phenomenology of the internal consciousness of time from Book 11 of Augustine's *Confessions*."[21]

Phenomenologically described, claims Husserl, inner time consciousness is not as incoherent as we might have expected. We retain our momentary impressions long enough to be able to observe them giving rise to a past into which they recede and a future toward which the present reaches out.[22] Second, when we actually describe the experience of consciousness, it turns out to be about our own inner processes only when we are thrown back on them. Presumptively, it is about objects in the world. By its very

nature, consciousness is "intentional" or object-focused in a way that modern philosophy of the sort found in Descartes, Locke, and Hume failed to recognize or honor.

Admittedly, consciousness may have trouble finding objects that remain identical enough through the comings and goings of so-called accidental properties to experientially validate Aristotle's claim that relatively stable substances, most of which come in repeatable kinds, are the furniture of the world and the primary objects of our intending minds. But it finds temporally changing objects readily enough. Like Augustine, who in *Confessions* talks about singing a hymn composed by his mentor, Ambrose, Husserl describes the experience of a musical phrase as paradigmatic of our experience of temporal objects.[23] The possibility looms that only our "common sense" prejudice in favor of a solid world full of spatially extended substantial objects (which may itself be little more than a trickle-down effect of Aristotle's huge cultural influence) stands between us and the thought that every object in the world, and so the world itself, might be temporal. Prodded by the emerging sciences of relativity physics and evolutionary biology, turn-of-the-twentieth-century philosophers, among them Henri Bergson and Alfred Whitehead, began to turn in the direction of process rather than substance metaphysics.[24] If Husserl does not go that far, it is not because he was not a man of his time but because he feared that in taking a metaphysical turn of any sort he might, under its influence, misdescribe phenomena that for him come into view only when all existence claims are suspended, even if they are not actively doubted, as in Descartes.

Husserl's student Martin Heidegger recognized that his teacher was not a metaphysical substantialist. But he also recognized that, in spite of his scrupulous precautions, Husserl's sense that time present can be captured on the wing distorts the phenomenon of time consciousness in the same way that Augustine's Neoplatonism distorted his account.[25] In his attempts to describe mental acts, Husserl adopts a purely contemplative stance. But this stance inherently flirts with or falls into a "metaphysics of presence," according to which present is privileged over past and future because the beings that are the objects of our mental acts—what we think *about* or hope *for*—are assumed to remain sufficiently identical for us to describe them accurately. With this corrective, Heidegger takes more seriously than did his mentor the principle that consciousness is focused on objects. He did so, however, by being less insistent on avoiding metaphysical, or at least ontological, entanglements. Our experience, Heidegger argues in *Being and Time*, is *so* oriented to Being that whenever we think about the world we find that

we are already immersed in it. Heidegger does not deny that we can suspend many of the existence claims Husserl thought marred correct descriptions of mental acts. But these, Heidegger argues, are merely "ontic" claims that use conceptual or categorical schemes, such as Aristotle's substance ontology, to identify, analyze, and manipulate the things (beings) we find in the world. We cannot, by contrast, suspend our being-in-the-world (*Dasein*), or indeed the being of the world itself, for the simple reason that, whenever we think about it, we find ourselves already in it.

There is more. We find that we can appreciate the sheer existence of the world, its looming up out of nothing, only to the extent that we allow ourselves to linger with our own fragility and contingency. Our ontological awareness of the contingency of being, Heidegger argues, which can be prompted by asking in an almost childlike way why there is something rather than nothing, has implications for time consciousness. The retention of the present and prehension of the future of which Husserl rightly speaks are validated only if we recognize that our anxiety and care for the future, preeminently the horizon of our own death, structures our experience of time. "Being future-oriented," writes Heidegger in 1924, "gives time because it is time itself. . . . We run ahead into the past."[26] For this reason, we are not in the world as observers. We are in the world because our ontological temporality, and the world's too, makes us future-oriented agents and patients. Accordingly, we cannot contemplate the present as present in quite the way Husserl's phenomenology, or for that matter Augustine's, requires.

We might plausibly say that Augustine testifies to these basic truths about our human condition by the very intensity with which he wants to deny or evade them. He wants the world's contingency to rest in the loving arms of divine necessity. He wants the feeling of anxiety, dread, and care that comes with the territory to go away. Heidegger himself, however, had his own evasive fantasies. In *Being and Time*, he contrasts the inauthenticity that he probably associated with the distracted liberal democratic capitalist way of life of Weimar Germany (and forever after with the United States, about which he had no firsthand knowledge but which later he was acutely aware had conquered and occupied his country), with the *ethos* of heroic resolution that (with some help from the novelist Ernst Jünger) he saw in German soldiers who had stood up to the First World War's "storm of steel." The Heidegger of the 1920s thought that those who are resolute in facing the human condition as being-toward-death can live authentically in ways that those who distract themselves with mass-mediated idle chatter cannot. The former can experience time as a *kairos* in which "running ahead

seizes the past as an authentic possibility" instead of dissipating themselves into the boredom of *chronos*. This notion was instrumental in Heidegger's early enthusiasm for the Nazis. He did not realize until it was too late that the heroic *ethos* promoted by the regime was an instance of, not a resistance to, the technologically obsessed mass society of which he was so contemptuous. It afforded even less protection against dread, anxiety, homelessness, boredom, and care than Augustine's attempts to assimilate himself to God's eternal present. Accordingly, Heidegger belatedly pivoted by claiming that his analysis of how human beings comport themselves had always been a prelude to his deeper interest in how being manifests itself to those who are receptive to it.

The later Heidegger exhibits a piety toward being that is hard to find in the earlier. His new openness forced him to ask whether our technological age—in which we cannot help but frame beings (in the plural, including persons) in ways that objectify and manipulate them—might be as authentic a way in which being (in the singular) discloses itself as the way in which, on the evidence of traces in their poetry, it disclosed itself to the ancient Greeks. He could not very well say that the same world is represented in different epochs under different descriptions. That would underestimate the ontological thrust of consciousness and would entangle Heidegger's philosophy in the modern mode of mental representationalism, whose universality he was out to deny. Having comforted himself a little by saying that every way of revealing is also a way of concealing, Heidegger concludes that the modern mode of experiencing the being of the world, which he calls "enframing," is the latest of a series of ways in which truth (which in Greek means "uncovering," *aletheia*) reveals itself to those who listen to its whisperings.[27] There is no telling when something new or better will come along and certainly no way of coaxing or forcing the issue. These epochal changes are unique events (*Ereignisse*). Without warning or causal antecedents, they suddenly reorder being-in-the-world itself. From the *evental* character of being, Heidegger embraces a challenging conclusion. Time consciousness cannot slip off the world and recede into subjectivity, at least fundamentally, not only because the human beings to whom it makes itself appear are temporal but because the fundamental object of their intentional consciousness, being itself, is temporal. It has, or rather is, a history. It is a history of transformative *events*.[28]

It remained for Heidegger's successors, many of the most informed and serious of whom were and are French, to inquire what a fundamental ontology of events, in which things just happen (*symbêbêken*, *es gibt*, *il arrive*), looks

like in contrast to a world full of relatively stable substances or even of dynamically changing processes. Among these successors was Jean-François Lyotard.

Substance, Predication, and Event in Lyotard

One might imagine that Aristotelian substantialism is an instance of a wider metaphysics of presence. Alternatively, one might think that whenever the presence of the present is privileged even as the object of a frustrated quest, as it is for Augustine, substance metaphysics will be found lurking somewhere nearby. Lyotard takes this second tack. Much of his philosophical work arises from a perception that it is both easy and revealing to find traces of substantialism when one begins from, and hopes to return to, ontology as evental.

Basic elements of the analysis of the relation—or better, dialectic—between substances and events can be found in Lyotard's earlier work. In *The Differend*, for example, he remarks on how Aristotle solved the Eleatic paradox according to which Socrates (or anyone else) must both exist and not exist because he both sits and does not sit. Aristotle saves the coherent reality of what appears from Eleatic skepticism about the perceptual world by introducing time into predication. He says that the "the man who is seated now (*nun*) and . . . the man who was seated formerly (*proteron*)" can refer to the same substantial being, Socrates, albeit at different times.[29] No sooner has Aristotle solved one problem, however, than another pops up. The "now" in which Socrates is sitting is an event that occurs (*symbêkêken*) at the moving boundary between past and future. So, nailing down an enduring subject under a transient predicate always misdescribes the event to which it refers by betraying its transience. "The current or actual presentation is impossible," writes Lyotard. "The event is forgotten insofar as it is conserved, anticipated, or maintained."[30]

So accustomed are we to the thinking of accidents as predicates of sentences that have subjects in both a grammatical and, tacitly, a substantial sense, that we fail to realize that it was not Aristotle but Hellenistic linguistic philosophers who turned his solution to an ontological problem about time into a purely grammatical one and, having done so, read grammar back into ontology. The twentieth century, it seems, was not the first to have linguistic philosophers. By means of their shift from *de re* to *de dicto* predication—from talk about things to talk about language—it was more or less forgotten that Aristotle's word for predicates is *symbêkêkota*. Conventionally translated as

"accidents," which itself means "what happens" in Latin, to predicate or to say one thing of or about another is to say "it happens" or "it occurs." The contingency of events that just happen was subsequently entombed, however, in syntactical structures that presuppose enduring substances. Whether Aristotle himself would have objected is doubtful. He was, after all, the paradigmatic substance ontologist, and substance ontologies are the graveyard in which the event ontologies that Heidegger finds in pre-Socratic philosophers and poets are buried.[31] Events, having been reduced to loose change in an otherwise ordered universe, are buried with them.

This theme also surfaces in Lyotard's treatment of Descartes in *The Confession of Augustine.* That Lyotard would dwell on Descartes is not odd. French philosophers live in the shadow of Descartes in the same way German philosophers live in the shadow of Kant and the British of Hume. Accordingly, Lyotard could tell his French hearers and readers something interesting about Augustine, about whom they may have known little beyond his reputation as a sexual prude, by telling them something about Descartes, with whom most will have been familiar since high school. What he tells them is that Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* argument re-enacts (without properly crediting him) an inference that Augustine himself drew when he made his reflective frame shift from external things to the vast fields of *memoria*. With that shift comes the realization that skepticism cannot be entirely true because one knows, at least, that one exists while one is doubting.[32] It is not only Augustine's beginning point that Descartes repeats, however, but also its literally substantive conclusion. The *cogito*, says Descartes, is true and self-validating "whenever I utter it."[33] Still, as Lyotard notes, Descartes discovers as he proceeds from one act of reflective self-validation to the next that there is no guarantee that any of them or their sum entails that each time I perform the *cogito* I am the same being. That is precisely why Augustine and his avatar Descartes both look to God's comprehensive and eternally present awareness of his creation to guarantee their identity over time. In *The Differend*, Lyotard rightly notes that for Augustine "God is the name borne by the instance that synthesizes the nows."[34]

Augustine is suitably grateful for God's act of conferring continuous existence on him. Descartes may or may not have been as grateful, but he was certainly aware that the slender thread on which his existence hung was God's goodness. Surely God, who is by definition good, would not deceive me, he argues, when I take myself to be the same being who remembers performing the *cogito* before breakfast and who might perform it again before going to bed. In this way, what is assumed by Augustine is explicitly stated

by Descartes: the same categorical structure, namely, substance (*ousia*), that underwrites the continuity of external objects as they undergo transient changes in space-time also underwrites the continuity of the self in inner time consciousness, thereby making me a thinking thing (*res cogitans*). To appreciate this argument, we must free ourselves from the nineteenth-century (largely positivist) prejudice that has early modern philosophy pushing God out of the world so that room can be made in which secularism can flourish. On the contrary, the point was to keep God in the world. If God is left out, or, as the later Heidegger said, withdraws himself, what Henri de Lubac calls the "drama of atheist humanism" moves inexorably toward its nihilist denouement in the political disasters that befell Europe in the twentieth century.

The argumentative pattern of Lyotard's *The Confession of Augustine* begins to make itself clear when read in the light of *The Differend*. In that work, Lyotard is reviewing a lineage of philosophers who have struggled with the fact that accurate description of time consciousness is betrayed by compulsive efforts to validate the substantiality of the self and to block recognition of the evental nature of our encounter with being. In the twentieth century, the story of the struggle to overturn this misconception runs from Husserl to Heidegger and from Heidegger through Emmanuel Levinas to Lyotard's kindred spirit, Jacques Derrida. At the end of the story, and of his own life, Lyotard implies that we will find Augustine waiting for us at a place where events trump substances and, not coincidentally, where *pathos*, first-person feeling, trumps *logos*, third-person abstract thinking.

Lyotard recognizes that Husserl did better than Descartes in pushing aside substance metaphysics and hyberbolic doubt. But the very fact that Husserl entitled one of his most important inquiries *Cartesian Meditations* shows that the stance of the detached observer that he shares with Descartes entangles Husserl in the metaphysics of presence and the shadow of substantialism, thereby distorting the affective aspects of Augustine's reflective turn in favor of the intellectualism that came with his Neoplatonism. Heidegger's improvements on Husserl bring the pathos of our encounter with being closer.[35] Yet in *The Differend*, which dwells on the incommensurability of discursive practices that leave cries for justice not only unheeded but, more importantly, unheard, Lyotard insightfully comments that even after he had softened *Being and Times'* claim that the authentic man "fulfils his destiny by hearing the authenticity of time," the later Heidegger retains the notion that "'man' is the addressee of the giving that the *Ereignis* [happening, occurrence, event] gives."[36] In that seemingly innocent term 'man' still

lurk all the old assumptions of continuity through change that Heidegger wished to but could not deconstruct unless he repudiated, as he never fully did, the ethos of pride that Augustine rightly saw as the root of every epistemic problem. Levinas, by placing the recognition of difference rather than of shared sameness at the heart of the phenomenology of our encounters with others (Heidegger's underplayed *Mitsein*, being-with), goes a considerable way toward correcting the errors of what Heidegger disparaged as "humanism." Derrida supported this argument—Levinas was a mentor—by showing that even an ethics that sets out to recognize others because of, not in spite of, their differences from us will still fall short if it overlooks the medium in which our reflection on ourselves and our communication with others takes place. The medium is speech.

Husserl assumed that he could describe experience in ways that treat the speech, or *logos*, in and through which we reflect as a limpid, transparent, and hence irrelevant medium. Heidegger partially corrects that. But his pompous and oracular style leads him to overlook the fact that the reflective speech of philosophers is written. Augustine writes. Descartes writes. Husserl writes. Heidegger writes. Derrida writes. The difference is that Derrida knows he is writing. Indeed, his works display writing as a performance, sometimes even a joking performance that puzzles and scandalizes many of his fellow philosophers.[37] Derrida has, however, a serious purpose in turning to the "grammatology," or discourse of writing, that goes back to the Hellenistic philologists. The arbitrary link between sign and signified—between the sound "tree," for example, and the notion of tree, and even more so between the notion "tree" and *a* tree—cannot possibly be overlooked when mental acts are viewed as speech acts and when speech acts are in turn viewed through the lens of writing. Descartes claims that the *cogito* argument is true every time he *pronounces* it, but this pronouncement comes to us because he wrote it down and subsequently published it. When this transmitted message is viewed through the linguist Saussure's distinction between *langue* and *parole*—that is, between language as a system and language as particular speech acts—we see that the arbitrariness of the sign-to-signified relation extends to the relation between the generality of terms, even instances of the first person singular pronoun "I," and the singularity of utterances. Language (*langue*) endlessly repeats and circulates these signs. Yet there is no speech occasion or speech act (*parole*) in which the very same thing is or can be repeated. There is always a difference, even in the "I." There is always a new event that happens. In this way, indeterminacy worms its way into the system of language itself, and the evental quality of predication—the fact that

it happens out of nowhere, which Aristotle both recognized and attempted to subvert by subsuming language under general terms—is liberated from its grammatical tomb to make possible Events with a capital "E." Derrida's playfulness with language enacts a serious philosophical claim.

This line of argument has a prehistory in which the figure of Augustine is deeply implicated. In the Middle Ages, a radically nominalist view of language took hold according to which terms are names (*nomina*) of particulars. General terms, or so-called universals, far from identifying the constitutive essences of instances of invariant kinds, are just shorthand devices for remembering and manipulating particulars. This semantics had no antecedent in antiquity. Nor before Augustine is there much evidence of voluntarism, the view that the world results purely from God's will, not necessity, and that we are beings in the world affectively, not, as Aristotle thought, intellectually. Until the scientific revolution took nominalism into its empiricism and discarded voluntarism as merely "subjective values," the two philosophical views, one semantic, the other ethical, traveled together to protect theology from periodic, if transient, upsurges of slightly Christianized Aristotelian necessitarianism and rationalism (in the thirteenth, sixteenth, and the early twentieth centuries). They affirmed that God knows individuals (each sparrow in each tree, each lily in each field, each person as a child of God) in a world that, according to *Genesis*, he freely created. The point was to set up an appropriately affective response among the faithful. This worldview, which the Augustinian monk Luther and much later the Lutheran Kierkegaard embraced, already shows pretty well what Augustine would look like if his embrace of ancient idealist philosophy as an *ancilla theologiae* were deleted from *Confessions.* Lyotard writes in full awareness of this history. Like Levinas and Derrida, he uses radically nominalist poststructuralist arguments about how language works to support ethical views that stress difference over sameness, because sameness or identity, in lumping things together, does violence to the infinite worth of individuals. Keep the Holocaust in mind, and you will understand the reasons for insisting on this.

These claims are at the focal point of Lyotard's *The Confession of Augustine*, in part because they were already on display in Derrida's "Circumfession," an autobiographical miming of Augustine's *Confessions* by another North African lad who made it big in the big city but also felt guilt about leaving his mother behind.[38] Her dying days are at one narrative pole in this work. The other pole shows Derrida challenging himself to disclose facts about himself that, as pure particulars, escape the voluminous "Derrida

data base" that had been amassed by the scholar Geoffrey Bennington. It is not fortuitous that what Derrida discloses as pure particularity is that, like Augustine, he is a man brimming with emotions, including guilt, as well as a man of prayer, albeit to a god unknown. The deep feeling of this work together with the notion that such feelings are generally hidden from the referential and generalizing tricks of language as it appears in public shows how the themes of nominalism and voluntarism, with help from modern phenomenology and linguistics, bring into focus aspects of Augustine's text that are too quickly passed by as we all too eagerly accede to his story about how he ascended to God on the wings of Neoplatonic philosophy.

For his part, Lyotard's commentary on Augustine's *Confessions* is not confessional. It is explicatory. Still, he sees the text through eyes very like those of Derrida. He brings to the enterprise the theory of predication he had set forth in *The Differend*. It is a theory in which, ontologically, events replace Aristotle's (or at least Porphyry's) substances; phrases—symbolic but (as in musical phrases) temporal items that have effects rather than meanings—replace his predicates; and *differends*—incommensurable particulars, including cries for justice that go unrecognized because they are buried under the commensurable terms in which law and politics supposes itself to be dispensing justice—replace his *differentiae*.

Nominalism comes in degrees. Lyotard's semantics is what Porphyry's predicables become in a universe of discourse far more nominalist than William of Ockham ever imagined. By applying to it this theory of language, Lyotard describes Augustine's experience in a way that makes new sense of his famous cry, "Too late have I loved thee, O beauty."[39] The intensity of his regret is built into the medium in which Augustine tells us about it. By its very nature, the act of writing comes too late to capture the thoughts that produce it or the events it discloses. Thus the act of writing instantiates the inherently deferred structure of human time consciousness every time, like Descartes' *cogito*, it is performed. "A presentation," Lyotard concludes, "always falls short of an occurrence."[40] "The delay that writing seeks to fill in is not to be caught up."[41] The palpable guilt Augustine feels for delaying subordinating his will to God's, which pervades his *Confessions*, follows almost analytically because its cause is enacted with every word he writes. Writing commits the sins to which it refers. It is easy to see, then, why Augustine is so vividly aware in the act of writing of his distention in time and of the lateness and fragility of his love of God. It is also easy to see that, if writing contains the key to the a priori structure of consciousness for which philosophers since Kant have been looking, as Derrida says it does, our situation in

the world is fundamentally temporal and *pathos*-laden in ways abundantly expressed in Augustine's *Confessions*.

WHAT LYOTARD'S READING OF AUGUSTINE CAN TEACH US

A question, possibly an objection, arises at this point. How could Lyotard believe that Augustine's phenomenology of time consciousness could be so accurate if his metaphysical commitments were so illusory? Does not Lyotard think that, in one way or another, metaphysics distorts Descartes', Husserl's, and Heidegger's descriptions of our experience of time? Why is the same not true of Augustine? Is not his view of our temporal distention merely an artifact of his Neoplatonic prejudices against time, space, and embodiment? Would we have the same distended affect if our metaphysical assumptions about the solidity of the world and the reliability of our epistemic relation to it were as confident as they were for Aristotle?

In reply, Lyotard might claim that Augustine's Neoplatonism distorts only his wishful assurances about God's presence and his belief that now and then he actually succeeds in assimilating himself to God's timeless present. After all, Augustine's anxieties about God's absence as well his intense emotions of longing, regret, and guilt, which Lyotard's encounter with the text of *Confessions* highlights, were shared by postnominalist Augustinians like Pascal and Kierkegaard, who were not Neoplatonists. Neither was Heidegger, who phenomenologically described just these feelings as part and parcel of the condition into which *Dasein* is thrown. Nor were Derrida and Lyotard, who, by taking the linguistic turn that Heidegger did not, found a transcendental argument that inscribed temporal distention into language itself, and hence into the conditions of the possibility of experience. Differing metaphysics seem to converge on the same experiential facts, if those describing them are sufficiently attuned to our condition.

I must admit that I am not entirely persuaded by this defense. Lyotard's analysis depends on Husserl's assurance that we can accurately describe the structure of human being-in-the-world only when we remove causal-explanatory, and hence metaphysical, blinkers. But philosophers have been taking this or that aspect of experience as foundational and dismissing other aspects as products of mere distraction ever since Parmenides contrasted truth (*aletheia*) with mere opinion (*doxa*). From start to finish of this long dialectical process, every promise made by a new thinker that his descriptions of experience are uninfluenced by the latent metaphysical biases that

undermine those of his predecessors has been shown to be false. Why should we take Lyotard's word that he is an exception?

Why instead should not this long disciplinary experience not inductively tell us that we can highlight *this* rather than *that* aspect of experience or of a text only by using a variety of noncongruent ontological frameworks to encode them—what one sees through one framework cannot be seen through another and vice versa—and by recognizing that true discoveries about particulars are conditioned by the fact that each conceptual framework comes to the scene of inquiry trailing clouds of its own brand of metaphysical excess. Pascal and Kierkegaard may not have been Platonists in the way Augustine was or in the different ways Boethius or Anselm of Canterbury or Ralph Cudworth or Lord Shaftsbury or F. H. Bradley were, but that does not mean they were not *disillusioned* Platonists—people who recognized that the conditions of our embodiment rules out our ability to climb up the ladder of loves to the divine but who continued to believe with Augustine that "our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee."[42] You can be an atheist and think that. But in doing so, a certain amount of Platonic imagery about the disappointing but expectant qualities of our embodied condition will continue to crop up, especially when other thinkers are being critiqued.

The line of thinkers that runs from Augustine to Heidegger by way of Pascal and Kierkegaard, and from Heidegger to Derrida and Lyotard by way of Levinas, is very effective in liberating us from the deficiencies of Aristotelian substantialism, especially its moral and political obtuseness about the infinite claims of others on us. But that does not mean that Lyotard's semantic theory, which uses the evental quality of predication to show how Events with a capital "E" are possible, increases in the slightest the probability of a transformative Event in which, in the twinkling of an eye, the reign of justice will be established by an ontological earthquake that might not be in the cards at all. Lyotard's descriptions of human life as constituted through the semantics of delay and the ontology of writing depend on his normative commitments as much as these commitments depend on these theories.[43] They as are metaphysical as anybody else's.

This downbeat conclusion does not mean that we cannot learn valuable lessons by using Lyotard's semantics to find fresh significance in Augustine's seminal text. Among its insights, I think, is that Lyotard's approach to Augustine's *Confessions* invites us to think about human communication, a phenomenon on which both excessive hopes and anxieties are currently pinned, in ways that do not overlook the material properties and effects of the media in which messages are encoded, disseminated, and received.

Failing to do this leads us to buy into the presumption that Augustine's *Confessions* is an accurate record of direct first-person speech addressed to a second person, God, who is represented as always already knowing Augustine better than he knows himself. Indeed, Augustine, for reasons we have discussed, is sure that without personally addressing God (and being assured that he is listening), he would have no coherent self at all and certainly no self that could know itself well enough even to confess. That is why praise and gratitude (aspects that Lyotard glosses over) permeate the text as much as regret and guilt. The rhetoric of this text, no doubt calculated by the master of rhetoric who was its author, is to invite readers to overhear an ostensibly private conversation that will prompt them mimetically to enter into the confessing relation to God that Augustine models. That is a very intimate mode of address, a mode more associated with person-to-person speech and hearing than with any form of mediated communication. It is, in fact, the way of reading *Confessions* that has been singled out in the reading practices of European piety as uniquely apt for taking up this text's message. This mode of reading perhaps reached its purest expression in Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ.* Written at the height of the nominalist and voluntarist revolution, this devotional work is as Augustinian as you can imagine, except for its implacable hostility to philosophical aids to piety of any kind, Aristotelian or Neoplatonic.[44]

Lyotard recognizes that, on the surface, *Confessions* is addressed à *toi.*[45] But he also recognizes that the machinery of writing, publishing, and reading that have been present at every point in the reception of Augustine's *Confessions* were no less present at its origin. In fact, reference to the technology of writing and reading is very near the surface of every sentence.[46] Looked at this way, *Confessions* is not a private communication between an I and a Thou at all. That is a fiction. It is a text sent out by an elaborate social institution of invention and publication, some of which involved slave labor, to an indiscriminate audience of unknown others. Like broadcast radio or television, it is, as John Durham Peters calls it, "speaking into the air."[47]

Lyotard recognizes this when, in the course of supporting his argument that Augustine delays and defers because he writes, he remarks that writing to God is a poor substitute for "confiding one's confessions to the inclined, immediate ear of an authorized priest or of the community."[48] Writing is delay embodied. "Never as much as in [written as opposed to aural] confession" to the face of a flesh-and-blood other, exclaims Lyotard, "does the art of writing appear more out of place, more sham, more astray."[49] Recognizing with Lyotard and Derrida that the *Confessions* is, materially considered, a

diachronically dispersed assembly of printed and decoded symbols allows us to see that, rather than firming up the boundaries of a self who is presumed already to exist, this text addresses itself to anonymous readers who are in the process of making, failing to make, and unmaking selves. The received view of Augustine's address to God presumes the very thing that Derrida and Lyotard, and at his best Augustine himself, deny—that speaker, reader, and God are already substantial selves before they encounter the text. In its most comforting version, the I-Thou dialogism that readers applaud in *Confessions* is licensed by importing into it the substantialist metaphysics that dialogical philosophies purport to be replacing. Lyotard offers a corrective. Viewing the text as a disseminated set of material symbols whose meaning is indeterminate until taken up allows him to call attention to selves in the making who, unlike the absurdly self-certain Descartes, are utterly immersed in, indeed defined by, time, desire, and expectation of future transformation.

Not everyone can be expected to like this reading of Augustine's *Confessions.* Christian intellectuals can easily be offended by the fact that writers who are categorically atheistic and whose lives have been dedicated to political enthusiasms at least as wacky as anything Augustine ever got himself into have found their way not only to Saint Paul, a man convinced that he was living in the midst of an evental transformation of the sort Heidegger postulated, but to Saint Augustine, whose discovery of Saint Paul made him feel the same way.[50] Aren't these *our* texts, Christians might rhetorically ask? Because some such assumption may well lurk behind it, let me plainly say that it is impertinent to assume, or worse to hope, that in coming to this view Lyotard was getting religion in the evening of his life. This is not a conversion narrative.[51] In turning to Augustine, Lyotard, a professional philosopher, was working on a philosophical problem that had occupied his attention for a long time and that to his mind had normative implications. We have seen what that problem is. It is about is how event and predication are connected and how the resolution of that issue bears on ethics. Derrida, for his part, had already raised the possible relevance of Augustine to the problem.[52] Lyotard was following suit.

Besides, why *not* write about Augustine's *Confessions*? Anyone as familiar with the history of philosophy as Lyotard was knows that this is one of the truly seminal works of European thought. It is far more accurate to say that our tradition is a series of footnotes to Augustine than to say that it is a series of footnotes to Plato. The fathers of modern philosophy did not make this mistake. Augustine is everywhere in Descartes, Pascal,

Malebranche, Berkeley, Rousseau, and others. Moreover, as we have already seen, by the fourteenth century philosophers of a nominalist and voluntarist cast of mind were already exploring what Augustine would look like if Neoplatonism and Greek philosophy more generally were subtracted from it. That is what Lyotard is doing too.

His approach, moreover, should teach Christians something. Apart from a bit of folk Stoicism, there is little Greek philosophy in the New Testament. Its main tropological resources are disseminative. The sower broadcasts his seed. Some happens to fall on stony ground, some on fertile. God's rain falls on the just and the unjust equally. Those that have ears to hear will hear. Those that don't won't.[53] It makes no difference where the message comes from. From Lyotard, for instance.

5

Love, and Interpret What You Will

A Postsecular Camus-Augustine Encounter

Ramsey Eric Ramsey

Spoken Words Setting the Stage

Even though one knows what one will say in a speech, one does not know what one will have said. In 1948 French-Algerian philosopher Albert Camus delivered a speech to the Dominican Monastery of Latour-Maubourg to which his editors give the title "The Unbeliever and Christians."[1] This wonderful and thoughtful speech ends with Camus citing Augustine so as to call all who are willing to confront evil, which Camus here says is exemplified by the torture of children. He calls to those in the audience, in the midst of whom he is considered the unbeliever, to share his belief or faith in the power of words and dialogue. It is in this speech that I find the fitting text to stage the opening of a dialogic encounter between the thought of Augustine and Camus. The encounter attends carefully to words and dialogue and makes way for a philosophy of communication that sets hermeneutical and rhetorical themes as its centerpiece. By way of testifying to the dialogue, this essay responds to the question: What does it profit us to engage a Camus/Augustine encounter in what contemporary continental philosophy of religion calls the postsecular world, or the age of interpretation?[2]

If the Camus/Augustine encounter I am staging takes off from the above speech by Camus, it had, of course, numerous other possible points of departure. For example, it is well documented that Camus' novel *The Fall* can be understood as a secular version of Augustine's *Confessions*, that *The Plague* is Camus' account of the confrontation between a Catholic and a secular worldview facing off in the in the midst of crisis, and that Camus' early dissertation work on Neoplatonism and Christianity is his

most detailed engagement in print with Augustine. No doubt each could serve as a beginning.[3]

For my part in the matter, because I share the unbeliever's desire to see justice in a world lacking it in too great a measure, I am attempting what must at first seem a counterintuitive move—to bring the atheist Camus back to religion in the name of philosophical health. Following a reading of Gianni Vattimo, I shall orient Camus' thinking such that it moves him away from some of his most cherished antireligious commitments while I embrace others of his key theoretical terms as examples of the hermeneutic theory of communication and rhetoric I shall develop. Throughout the whole of the reading, I shall use this understanding of hermeneutics to theorize appropriate contributions to a philosophy of communication.

Although his direct statements leave religion behind, the concepts Camus carries forward—namely dialogue, solidarity, resistance to slavery, as well as faith, hope, and love—bring with them religious overtones and thus some lasting connections to and from Augustine's *Confessions*. After quoting Camus from his early work that directly engages Augustine and wherein Camus says himself of the saint, "Greek by his need for coherence, and Christian in the anxieties to which his sensibility gave rise," David Sprintzen goes on to write, "Camus located himself at the crossroads of these conflicting sentiments."[4] A place to begin, then, from these crossroads and the words spoken and shared with those monks Camus believed need to be his friends in the seeking of justice.

A POSTSECULAR UNDERSTANDING, OR QUITTING THE HORIZON OF OBJECTIVITY

From the standpoint of continental philosophy of religion, the unmistakable philosophical and cultural event standing between Augustine and Camus is, of course, the death of G-d. I begin here so as to remind ourselves what is at stake in the postsecular encounter being staged. Consequently, we shall listen to Nietzsche's Madman who, in aphorism 125 from the *Gay Science*, announces this event and draws out its consequences.[5] The popular reading of this event, the one passed around without nuance and used as a bludgeon by run-of-the-mill atheists, includes misunderstanding the target of the Madman's words as being Christian believers. Although the Madman's message comes at a point historically after Augustine and before Camus, by my reading its target is more so the Camus-like atheist than his faithful Christian forerunner, Augustine (Nietzsche has words for the latter

elsewhere, to be sure). The Madman seems to represent a certain Christian belief that already understands this: commanded not to lie such that the truth would set them free, they find themselves facing a correspondence theory of truth rendering their onto-theological G-d redundant. Somehow, Christians understand that they are complicit in bringing about the death of G-d and that what the Madman comes to make known in the market place is its consequences for *everyone*. On this account, the Madman is a type of Christian searcher, seeking G-d but also understanding he shall not find him in any traditional sense.

It helps to remember the implied narrator of this aphorism is not the Madman but rather a teller of his tale who tells of the Madman's encounter with the marketplace atheists. The narrator begins the aphorism by sounding surprised that news of the Madman's story and the consequences of the death of G-d have not yet made the rounds: "Have you not heard?" he begins in a tone marked by incredulity. The Madman, of course, has heard; indeed, such understanding motivates his search, yet the atheists have not heard that they belong to the death of G-d in detrimental ways that they do not understand, a death they even here naively celebrate. Consequently, and given that the message has been distorted in being passed along, we do well to call to our attention that in this story the Madman's news is directed unambiguously to the ears of the atheists: "as many who do not believe in God were standing around just then," Nietzsche says of those directly addressed by the Madman.[6]

The audience members for the Madman's speech are those very prideful atheists making their day-to-day way in the marketplace unaware of what their calculations, dissections, and measurements have wrought. On hearing the Madman's cry—"I seek God I seek God"—those atheists gather in the marketplace and through their own mocking laughter, respond thus: "Why, did he get lost? said one. Did he lose his way like a child? said another. Or is he hiding? Is he afraid of us? Has he gone on a voyage? Or emigrated? Thus they laughed and yelled."[7] One can think here that Nietzsche is in part echoing the scene from 1 Kings 18:24-39 yet with the significant reversal, of course, that now the unbelievers call out these taunts and the G-d of Abraham does not answer and thus remains missing.

Furthermore, and quite damning in its own way, these mocking marketplace dwellers do not realize that they themselves are the heirs of the Christian worldview they so cavalierly mock and dismiss. The Nietzschean critique shows the inherited lineage passed along from Platonism to Monotheism and finally to those in the marketplace in the form of a calculating,

fact-seeking scientism—a history marking a series of differences in degree and not in kind between the marketplace dwellers in this aphorism and the Harrises, Dawkinses, and Hitchenses of today.[8] To twist away from this heritage, to come to terms with what the murder of G-d, has brought upon the world ("All of us are his murderers," the Madman exclaims) requires that we quit the horizon of objectivity, to use a phrase of Vattimo's nuanced from his teacher, Hans-Georg Gadamer. That is to say, after all the consequences of the death of G-d brought about by the rise of modern scientific and analytical thinking, ethical thought needs a language other than that of calculation and mere empiricism to answer our pressing questions concerning justice. We need another language than this wholly secular one, one that comes after modernity's secularization of the world.

In the wake of the consequences of the death of G-d, Vattimo contends that hermeneutics is the only philosophy left to us in this postsecular age. To quit the horizon of objectivity is to reveal the message of the centrality of hermeneutics in the wake of the death of G-d. As we shall see, this brings with it a return of what Vattimo calls the mature Christian message to our thinking in a postsecular age. Vattimo shows that we find ourselves faced with our most pressing ethical and religious questions in this situation: we are called by words and history and our place within both to persuade others of our confident commitments without being able to prove them with certainty, that is to say, without being able to tether these commitments to any absolute. Thus, we must be answerable to ourselves for what we say and believe ought to be because such responsibility falls to us alone, to our words and what is disclosed in our name by them, and we must not defer this responsibility to either an otherworldly G-d-induced dogma or scientific objectivity (we must persuade without being able prove, as Gadamer puts it). In this hermeneutic orientation we find the whole of our dialogic responsibility disclosed to us in a postsecular world.

In various related works, Vattimo shows that, after the secularization of culture that defines modernity and that has led to the death of the G-d of morality, we find ourselves in the midst of the mature historical message Christianity came to share. Calling this philosophy "weak thought" because it weakens the strong onto-theological structures of the West, Vattimo sees the incarnation of G-d into the world and the word as making the historical message of the Gospels one of just such a weakening: "The keystone of this argument is the term 'secularization.' This, as is well known, indicates the process of 'drifting' that removed modern lay civilization from its sacral origin."[9] Equally important, this historical task of weakening must continue

to weaken the strong structures of the church itself as an institution and as a purveyor of onto-theological claims:

> If the natural sacred is the violent mechanism that Jesus came to unveil and undermine, it is possible that secularization—which also constitutes the Church's loss of temporal authority and human reason's increasing autonomy from dependence upon an absolute God, a fearful judge who so transcends our ideas about good and evil as to appear as a capricious or bizarre sovereign—*is precisely a positive effect of Jesus' teaching and not a way of moving away from it.*[10]

This understanding of the process of secularization brought on by the message of Christianity itself orients a return to classic religious texts.

In traditional theological language, Vattimo reads secularization as the consequence of the incarnation in terms of *kenosis*, as the emptying of G-d into this world (and thus into language and history) that marks the death of the G-d of metaphysics and onto-theology (we note here that this is the G-d in whom Camus cannot believe and in whom Augustine can have faith). This event, then, marks the Christian message as one of radical secularization—one that moves us from servants of a transcendent master to friends in the charity-laden loving struggle of worldly dialogue. As Vattimo writes, we understand this secularization as the truth of Christianity and "not as the failure of or departure from its truth, which is, as we recall, the *kenosis*, the abasement of God, which undermines the 'natural' features of divinity."[11]

One thus surrenders the certainty of the G-d of onto-theology and natural religion in the name of the friends whose task it is to live in a community of salvation watched over and motivated by love and charity in the wake of the weakening of the strong metaphysical structures of our historical being-together. With the call to love as the guiding force of our being-together, we enter the age of interpretation, when those whose interpretations inevitably conflict must listen to one another in the spirit of charity because "revelation does not speak of an objective truth, but of an ongoing salvation" made real by interpretation and reinterpretation of the Christian message.[12]

In light of this reading of kenosis and the task of interpreting the message, we see that those philosophical and cultural texts that hasten the anti-metaphysical secularization of our world are at the same time the ones that hasten the realization of the mature Christian message and announcement of the Gospels, despite what absolutist intentions they may have had or that are still offered in their name. This understanding leads Vattimo to the claim that Nietzsche, with his announcement of the death of G-d, is

one exceptionally faithful to the message of the Gospel, and it is this type of interpretation I wish to offer of Camus. Such faithfulness now expresses itself as a way of listening and hearing the words spoken and announced and that require our interpretations. Such interpretations made in this hermeneutic situation defining our age become ones whose conflicts can appeal to no overarching, no *arche*-based nor universal certainty for adjudication. The commandment to practice charity and love as we listen and interpret in dialogue with one another is the hermeneutic word Christianity announces in and as the Gospels. A world twisting away from its absolutes is the world called for by the Christian message itself as the condition of the possibility of truths found in dialogue. Of this age Vattimo writes, "what I am suggesting here is that hermeneutics—expressed in its most radical form in Nietzsche's statement and in Heidegger's ontology—is the development and maturation of the Christian message."[13] To heighten the claim to its extreme, Vattimo provocatively puts it thus: "postmodern nihilism constitutes the actual truth of Christianity."[14]

If, as Vattimo suggests, the playing out of modernism has led to the age of interpretation and thus ushered in the maturing truth of Christianity, then we see Camus in a new light as one whose critique of the nihilist absolutist claims of religion ought be met with an equally religious lesson of charity. Yet this call to truths requires responsibility, heart, and a rhetorical orientation committed to the ceaseless care and concern for words, for conversation, for dialogue among groups of friends and among competing groups of friends (e.g., unbelievers and Christians). Here we meet certain traditional readings and consequences of Augustine and the Augustinian tradition that must suffer this weakening if there are to be postsecular readings of the *Confessions*. Given over to this way of thinking hermeneutically shall be the how and the when of the reading of the Camus/Augustine encounter below.

In this light, the critique of the onto-theological G-d and the critique of the promise and supposed inevitability of Historical Progress, the two major themes of Camus' most comprehensive and mature philosophical work, *The Rebel*, become in this light Christianizing acts of secularization rather than the claims of Camus' absolute and unwavering atheism. Vattimo writes now apropos of Camus: "If God is dead, if philosophy has recognized that it cannot with certainty grasp the ultimate foundation, then philosophical atheism is no longer necessary. Only an absolute philosophy can feel the necessity of refuting religious experience."[15] My readings here are undertaken in this postsecular space, a spaced marked by having passed

through the modernist critique of religion, learning many lessons and seeking a return to some of its themes, all while eschewing its absolutist theoretical commitments. Summarizing, then: by postsecular I understand (1) a way of being-in-the-world that has quit the horizon of objectivity by rejecting as ultimately authoritative any absolute claim in any of their guises (from science to theology) as the final arbiter of truth and (2) simultaneously, a loving embrace of traditionally religious and theological words, concepts, and texts without accepting, however, any of their objectivists or metaphysical claims or naïve literalisms.

Lending a Postsecular Ear to Moments in Camus and Augustine

There is always going to be something Augustinian about the existentialist Camus. We see this most tellingly in his early work, where he says of Augustine what could well be a keen self-description: “there is something peculiar to the author of the *Confessions*, namely that his own experience continues to be the constant point of reference for all his intellectual inquiries.”[16] These two African-born thinkers also share other beginnings—specifically, struggling with the problem of evil, meditating on questions of freedom, and suffering a passionate dread about the fact and consequences of death. Camus shares in so many ways Augustine’s starting point and seeks to face the chaos and sin/injustice of this world without, however, having recourse to Augustine’s onto-theological outs. For instance, Augustine’s position against what the saint thinks is the Pelagian heresy (i.e., the question of predestination) is a position the will- and liberty-loving philosopher Camus cannot abide. In his dissertation, where he deals directly with Augustine’s thinking, Camus asserts that to become more profound, historically, Christianity had to make itself a system of thinking and, furthermore, “Saint Augustine above all” is such a system maker. Camus believes his critique of what he calls historical Christianity (and seems to mean here an understanding of Augustinian Catholicism), with that system’s absolutism and its philosophical appeal to a transcendent G-d, is the undermining once and for all of such religious systems.

What remains of the parts of metaphysical system when the system itself is undone? To believe one has argued away—with some sense of reassurance, as Camus does—the G-d of theism and metaphysics and their systemization and that it follows from this that all conceptions of G-d and religiosity are thereby torn asunder, is a mistake. Yet if we consider this a mistake, it does

not follow that we shall now be able to usher back in the G-d of theism and all its attendant commitments, because it is equally mistaken to believe, as Augustine did, that if one has faith, any or many so-called earthly questions that remain unanswered or are indeed unanswerable lead one directly back to the G-d of theism. It is in sharing of opposite sides of this "same" mistake where Augustine and Camus meet from a postsecular hermeneutic perspective. There is little question Camus rivals Augustine from the other side of the question concerning G-d. That is to say, Camus' participation in the dogmatic critique of Christian absolutism embraces, however unwittingly, the view from no-where so precious to Augustine's metaphysical and Neoplatonist Christianity.[17]

This is explained theoretically by Camus still believing in a present-to-hand absolute as a conceptual necessity so as to have a justifiable position against religion. Consequently, he lacks the faith necessary to be answerable without certainty and without risk for his own position, but such faith is the sine qua non of hermeneutics. By taking this line, Camus shows he does not engage faithfully the age of interpretation in which he, and we with him, finds himself. Often Camus' writings suggest life has lost its meaning because it has lost all absolutes as underwriters of meaning (e.g., the unmediated nature of his naturalism). The talk of meaninglessness is itself, of course, meaningful. By this we do not mean to make the rather glib charge that it is thus nothing more than a performative contradiction, and we even note that Camus invokes such a claim against the unreconstructed nihilists who would choose without regret either suicide (as he does in the *Myth of Sisyphus*) or murder (as he does in *The Rebel*). We see Camus' concern as meaningful, however, in that it comports with his commitment to the unnecessary demand that absolutes are necessary to ground human being-together and thus underwrite meaning. This lament comes from accepting the wrong set of assumptions, ones inherited from the lineage that extends from today's scientism back through monotheism and back still further to Platonism. In making his claim on this basis, Camus places himself alongside those in the market place to whom the Madman addressed his lament.

Consequently, not being able to quit the horizon of objectivity, Camus endlessly comes too harshly against a self-imposed limit to thinking. However, despite his undeniable intellectual courage, no amount of crashing into this limit set by the horizon of objectivity with the philosophical tools at his disposal will weaken it (this losing battle is epitomized for me in *The Myth of Sisyphus*). As I have shown, it is a certain rhetorical and religious way of testing this limit that has a chance to weaken it and thus cast a new hue on

the philosophy of Camus. If to quit the horizon of objectivity is linked with a certain way of interpreting and thus understanding religion, then one has a chance to wean Camus' philosophical thought off its own absolutist theoretical presuppositions and return them to a richer position he embodied in his rhetorical practice as an orator and as a novelist. Despite his disdain for absolutes, Camus holds on to a demand of Platonism that keeps him from allowing religious thought, and thus certain rhetorical insights, to have their say in his philosophical thinking about the contemporary world. With my postsecular hermeneutic move, then, I approach Camus' thought to engage certain central aspects of it and now allow his work to be placed in future conversations with contemporary theories of rhetoric and philosophies of communication, sharing as they do more than a few similarities with continental philosophies of religion engaged in a recovery of Augustine and Augustinian themes.

With these hermeneutic commitments, I turn also to Augustine to read him so as to link him with Camus otherwise than simply biographically, but now also by way of this postsecular orientation. The *Confessions* of Saint Augustine are, of course, told to us rhetorically in two registers. As they appear in the organization of the text, they seem to move chronologically. Moreover, they move in an order such that a persuasive tale of transformation takes place and takes place necessarily. However, the second register is conveyed in the telling of the tale itself because the recounting takes place postconversion. The already-having-taken-place of transformation is the space of already having experienced the conversion from within which Augustine narrates the taking place of the very transformation, making it appear as unfolding in a necessary and logical order. It is from looking back from the having-become-transformed that all the events seem now absolutely necessarily to have to have happened just this way. Here, listening to both registers at once, we see that on in the most common onto-theological reading, Augustine does not so much mean to persuade readers of his case as he seeks to prove it to them as mere onlookers of the scene.

From this perspective of proven certainty, the Augustinian transformation is one that moves step by step in an upward manner, with each step an improvement from the one left behind. Accordingly, for Augustine, the move from rhetoric (sophistry) to philosophy is a major improvement and a stage-setting for what will become *the* transformative step. This first step into philosophy, necessary but not yet sufficient, is followed by the step from philosophy to religion (theology) so famously concluded in book 8 of the *Confessions*. Interestingly, one can here take note of a crossing between the

two thinkers' understandings. Camus moves in the opposite direction, from religion to philosophy to rhetoric (understood as art and literature), but in doing so he leaves behind religion altogether (or so he seems to believe). However, the reading undertaken here cannot accept this as a linear progression, for either thinker, such that religion is the terminus or that what is left behind is done so tout court. If these steps are necessary, they are not because that necessity steps along a straight road. Rather, we shall see them as steps in a dance, choreographed in a hermeneutically circular manner (think here, perhaps, of the dancing in a Pindar ode) that is always moving among and around the circle of rhetoric-philosophy-theology. The postsecular hermeneutic perspective means to embody theology-rhetoric-philosophy all together, yet only after we understand that each term is to be understood differently after the death of G-d, after the rehabilitation of rhetoric, and after the lessons learned from modernity, with each term in the dance employed in a continuing attempt to bring about the weakening of the hold the horizon of objectivity has on us.

When we say the Word, then, we mean philosophy-rhetoric-theology all at once in a circular series of relations never finally leaving one for another. Each comes along with all the others, each and every time as well as all the time. No doubt Augustine's *On the Christian Doctrine*, for example, recognizes these moments. However, it does so only in part. His conviction that words are vessels and tools of carrying unquestionable proof of the divine message (the voice of G-d) cannot be our understanding of words or the Word. If Augustine does not leave the lower steps behind for good, he nonetheless subordinates unquestioningly those two first lower steps (rhetoric and philosophy) to the last (theology).

Accepting the claim whereby the ontological argument is said to show the fundamental need for something we could call religious in the postsecular sense requires, then, that we follow the equally confident belief that the religion and the G-d so disclosed cannot be the G-d called G-d, the G-d of theism traditionally understood.[18] That is to say, G-d cannot be an entity who could be said to exist and to whom predicates in terms of the present-to-hand could be attributed. Thus, the ontological argument leaves us searching for religious announcements in a horizontal transcendence of our being-together-with-one-another in conversation and cuts off the move to a facile return to the various versions of the G-d of theism. This does not, however, silence the voice of G-d.

The voice of G-d, the one that can move us to miracles, is able to be heard in careful, charity-laden, and ongoing conversations among human

beings. After the incarnation, human-being-together-in-conversation is what is left to us of and as divinity. In this historical moment (destined as it is by *Gestell*) some of this voice's best, clearest, most moving, most resounding, most ringingly true words come from poems and plays and novels: in a word, from fictions. That is to say, the voice of G-d still comes from those places where Camus was most religious because, there, he was at his best with words.

When we turn to religion, and to words, and voice in such a manner, we confront the other and experience this transcendence in the rhetorically hued space of discourse and meaning always already shared by being-with-one-another-understandingly-in-the-world. Camus can be said to call this experience, which I have called religious and postsecular, an experience that is both patient and agent, by the names "art" and "dialogue." However, because he is still caught, theoretically at least, in the project of a modernism unforgivingly hostile to religion, he fails to see this being-together as a way of recovering religiosity and religious insight. From the postsecular position indebted to the reading of Vattimo, however, we can come back to Camus, as I am attempting here, to make even more of his appeal to art and dialogue, opening them again to and as religious discourse.

By Camus' account, art unites; thus art—as does (re)ligion in one of its etymologies—becomes another way of binding persons in solidarity. The religion against which Camus rightly and righteously engaged his critique must in the wake of this critique become something other, namely, a poetic calling to being-together. It becomes an aesthetic manner of rhetorical disclosure that leaves behind, tries to escape, and weakens the force of a discourse that would reduce religion to its extinction as a series of objective claims to historical and empirical states of affairs to be judged as statements of fact. It is this existentialism articulated in aesthetic texts that makes Camus an ally of the postsecular religious thinker today.

In practice, for Camus and the Christian monks to become the friends, Camus believes they must become thus to be able to fight evil, each must find a way to give up its own particular version of the onto-theological Truth to which each adheres and that gives each its form of life. The postsecular thinking advocated here—and this will be Christianity's good news when it becomes mature enough to proclaim it—asks us to prefer friends to Truth because only with our friends are truths possible. When Camus shares with the monks his belief about what they have in common and says, "I do not share your hope," this does not mean that Camus has no hope; indeed, he calls his hope "stubborn" and will not let it go. For Camus, hope is the

rejection and rebellion against the values that ground a nihilism that cannot get beyond the starting point of the absurd. In stubborn hope and in an art created "to save from death a living image of our passions and our sufferings . . . [and] praise at length what deserves to be praised," a transcendence shows itself in the world.[19]

What Camus cannot do theoretically he does nonetheless accomplish in practice. His dialogue and solidarity with those religious persons willing to fight injustice in this world is an example in practice of what he calls for from each of us: the call to love, to charity, and to dialogue. Evidence of this solidarity between believer and unbeliever is found in *The Rebel* in the example so profound for Camus' mature thinking. Grace in a postsecular world, what he calls "insane generosity," is exemplified by the act of a group of Spanish Catholics defying the injustices of their clerics:

> If all are not saved, what good is the salvation of one only? Thus Catholic prisoners, in the prison cells of Spain, refuse communion today because the priests of the regime have made it obligatory in certain prisons. These lonely witnesses to the crucifixion of innocence also refuse salvation if it must be paid for by injustice and oppression. This insane generosity is the generosity of rebellion, which unhesitatingly gives the strength of its love and without a moment's delay refuses injustice.[20]

The position taken in *The Rebel* and the rhetoric employed there is one philosophically and critically related in more than simply passing ways to the value of exodus and abolition and thus a type of an ongoing salvation, which has its roots, I am arguing, in certain lessons taken from his reading of Augustine. Camus says he is searching and looking with the same passion Augustine had while looking for salvation. Yet Camus' search is guided by the desire to find a "rule of conduct outside the realm of religion and its absolute values."[21] Perhaps Camus is looking outside of absolute religious claims yet not outside the formal universal claim to love he tried to embody.

It takes strength to get oneself to love, and in the end Camus calls it "a strange form of love" that the world demands of those who find no respite in G-d nor History. The simple call to love is not existentially easy to embrace, and the world gives us many temptations to avoid doing so: "Seeing beloved friends and relatives killed is not a schooling in generosity. The temptation to hatred had to be overcome."[22] Despite the popular conception of existentialism as a philosophy of the solitary, the alone, Camus knows better and rejects this philosophical label because of his concerns for our being-together. When pressed by the call for justice and the simultaneous desire to

create his response to it in art, he believes he will be as successful as possible by "drawing help from others, from friendship."[23]

Camus' strange love needs to be understood as a tending and caring. Love is what attempts to create an abode, a dwelling vulnerable, threatened, and risky for the homelessness of our uncanny situation. This home fashioned by the hard work of hermeneutics can never be a fortress. Camus takes from Augustine a desire for love and love's possible healing power and also takes over the tilting and inclining toward the other that so memorably begins the *Confessions*. We are all always tending toward one another. Yet here Camus' version cannot tilt or incline toward a G-d who is understood as a vertically transcendent entity. Neither Camus nor we after him shall be able to lean this way: our inclinations must rather be to the horizontal within-the-world transcendence of the divinity of being-with-others, one constituted by a strange love and whose gathering in a congregational way is called by Camus *solidarity*. This solidarity is formed, tempered, and created in generosity by the rhetoric of dialogue. Either we choose to act in confidence with our fellows, whose faces Camus claims show that they understand what is at stake even if they lack the courage to act, or we fall to the loveless slavery of nihilism and the absurd.

Love is also our way back to Augustine in a nonmetaphysical orientation and with our ears poised to hear the power of stories and words. In the famous book 8 of the *Confessions* we hear the following:

> While Pontician was telling his story, you, Lord, used his words to wrench me around to front myself, dragging me out from behind my back, where I cowered to avoid seeing myself, and "planting me in front of my own face," where I could see the foul me, how distorted and dirty, how spotted, how ulcerous.[24]

In the age of interpretation, the power of narrative and story find their place and have come theoretically to the fore, as so many others thinking in this way have noted. The power of narrative grants us the distance necessary to see not only ourselves but also others and the worldly dwelling we share. In a word, stories have quite a hold on us: "this sight revolted me, but there was no escaping it–each time I tried to turn my gaze away from me, he went on with his story; and you kept holding me there, thrusting me into my own face."[25] The power of the right story brings us face to face with ourselves as a question and filled with questions like those cried out by Augustine: "What is the matter with us? Has it come to this? Did you hear that story?" Stories

confront us, and although they have a hold on us, we have to also say that some stories let us get a hold of ourselves. To take a story to heart signifies the possibility that many things might well change after listening to a story.

In the hermeneutic milieu that has been ushered in by secularization, we have already seen that love and charity are the commandments fitting to this situation. Thus with a nonmetaphysical orientation embodying an understanding that holds philosophy-rhetoric-theology in one unhierarchized embrace, we hear the following from Augustine as a universal lesson of our testimonies: "I shall risk testifying to you, Lord, in such a way that, even though I cannot be the one to make my own testimony credible to others, the love with which they listen will lend it credit."[26] We take from this what Augustine cannot: every testimony remains provisional qua testimony and cannot be absolute. Testimonies await the love of their listeners.

From his position, Augustine is committed to ask concerning all the evidence that for him points to G-d and is available to everyone: "Then why does it not deliver to all the same message?" Here, communication is not understood by postsecular thinking as the delivery of a self-contained message—not even or especially not as the Word—but as a testimonial announcement. A message in light of our work here is but the beginning of a task, the task to respond in love and charity to what has been heard and shared in the communicative and testifying act to that which one believes one has seen, experienced, undergone. By his own account, Augustine's love of G-d is, of course, the most precious thing because, as the love of the onto-theological G-d, it, unlike faith and hope, extends beyond this world because G-d is the love object that cannot be lost even in death. The adjudicating rationality so precious to Augustine and Camus, each in his own manner, gives way in the age of interpretation to the loving struggle of hermeneutics as the need to be ever responding to stories and discourse.

In the final analysis, Augustine cannot allow G-d to be historically ambiguous nor allow our shared understanding of him to be provisional. By the postsecular account, however, this is the quality of the Word and our only access to it: we have nothing less than the never-ending responsibility of embracing in what ways we are able the provisional understandings we have of the divine through rhetoric-theology-philosophy. The love that lends credit to what is said and heard in any testimony provides a provisional understanding of the message that remains historically uncertain, which is not to say not meaningless. To the contrary, the world is always already meaningful to us, thrown as we are into words and social relations already meaningfully underway upon our arrival. What we believe we embrace with

some confidence so that we can make our way having heard what has been said. We make better sense, we have argued here, if we take words in the threefold manner of theology-rhetoric-philosophy. The word always awaits us, and the love we need and about which we have learned from Augustine sends us on our way. The task to which we are called from our postsecular hermeneutical thinking is to reword and reworld this love: "Those who followed Christ when he appeared to them in Palestine did not do so because they had seen him perform miracles, and even less had all those who followed him subsequently done so. They believed, as we say in Italian, *sulla parola*, that is, they took him at his word; they had *fides ex auditu*, faith from hearing."[27] Against the backdrop of this type of reading, we shall seek to multiply the nonmetaphysical readings of Augustine.

We have attempted in this work to practice a version of the moderation for which Camus calls at the conclusion of *The Rebel* as a way to avoid the mistakes between the two extremes against which he was arguing there, the Beyond of historical Christianity and the Later On of totalitarian historical materialism. In his speech to Christians with which we began, Camus claims, "Between the forces of terror and the forces of dialogue, a great unequal battle has begun. I have nothing but reasonable illusions as to the outcome of this battle. But I believe it must be fought, and I know that certain men at least have resolved to do so."[28] Elevating dialogue to the pinnacle of the possibilities of human interaction across hermeneutic divides, such as the one separating the unbeliever and the Christian, Camus' love and desire for justice echoes wholeheartedly the claim of Vattimo that we seek salvation "not because we have broken sacred principles that were metaphysically sanctioned, but rather because we have 'failed' toward those whom we were supposed to love."[29] In the face of such failings and in the absence of metaphysical guarantees, we take some degree of hope in acknowledging with Camus, "Speaking itself is restorative." In the face of suffering and when there is something to be done, believers can join unbelievers when the stakes are highest because, as Camus notes to his Christian hosts, "If you do not help us, who else in the world can help us do this?"[30] Camus, doubtless, would accept the same question echoed back from them.

Yes, we are still and must remain a question, an enigma, a conundrum to ourselves, brought face to face with ourselves by the stories and interpretations offered to us in dialogue with others. The provisional answers we shall need will be grounded in a life always already intertwined within theology-rhetoric-philosophy and shared in our historical dwelling with one another in the word.

A Strange Postsecular Love Will Lend Our Testimonies Credit

Where does this leave the hermeneutic philosopher of religion and the religious thinker who understands that today G-d cannot be made to suffer the onto-theological certainty of ontic discourse but who also wants something positive from belief? We have attempted here to say that it leaves us not so much between Camus and Augustine as near them both in a new way and with a new orientation that has made its own conversion: poised for a return that looks future-ward, one stepping carefully and advancing slowly toward what remains and must remain of an honest thinking-seeking dialogue, embracing an insane generosity and/as grace and a strange love that is meant to suggest the religious ways of the warm heart necessary for our being-together-understandingly-with-one-another-on-this-earth.

Those of us thinking in these postsecular ways have, then, a very strange task of persuasion ahead of us. We must not only talk the Camusian unbelievers out of their too-sure atheism and into a mature Christianity they already embody, if they only knew; we must also talk the too-traditional Augustinians out the historical Christianity they hold on to. The Augustinians must be talked into the hermeneutical Christianity they have not yet acknowledged within themselves, belonging as they must to the age of interpretation, the age into which Christian belief has been delivered to the West. And it can be done by conversing with Camus and Augustine. Thinking with an ethical atheist all too atheistic in his denials and a religious believer all too certain in his belief in G-d as an entity leads us to wonder, to a love that could home our homelessness, and to our always having to begin—as friends in words, in creativity, and in the constant hermeneutic play of theology-rhetoric-philosophy.

6

"A Limit That Resides in the Word"

Hermeneutic Appropriations of Augustine

John Arthos

Augustine occupies a pivotal place in Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics, although at one remove—a teacher of teachers. The root of his significance for Gadamer lies principally in his reflections on "the deepest mystery of Christian doctrine, the mystery of the Trinity."[1] Gadamer placed unequivocal emphasis on this theme: "I personally believe that this doctrine has constantly stimulated the course of thought in the West as a challenge and invitation to try and think that which continually transcends the limits of human understanding."[2] The influence of Trinitarian thought bears principally on the hermeneutic approach to the nature of language, though the view of language developed in the encounter with Augustine takes Gadamer's hermeneutics in a direction so radical that we are still feeling its effects. We begin to see in Gadamer's introduction how Augustine's understanding of human time in the *Confessions* will dovetail with his understanding of logos in the Trinitarian writings. I am going to trace the link between these two themes in Augustine and show how this link bears fruit in hermeneutics.

At the Crossroads of Western Culture

Gadamer wrote a remarkable little précis of Augustine's significance for Western philosophy in a school anthology he edited entitled *Philosophisches Lesebuch*, a four-volume collection of primary readings of the Western tradition.[3] As an explanatory preface to the selection from Augustine's *Confessions*, it has the simple purpose of placing the reading in context, but it has the characteristic density that Gadamer gave to even his simplest statements. It dwells on the connection Augustine establishes between temporality and

the soul, and in doing so it opens a path to Augustine's ruminations on Trinitarian theology as a whole. Gadamer invites his students to consider Augustine's life experience and intellectual development in relation to Christian theology and the speculation that arose out of this encounter in its impact on the whole area of Western philosophy. Augustine connects two problems: the resistance of time to a simple chronological identity and the way human thought straddles an embodied materiality and a disembodied interiority. I translate Gadamer's brief preface here in full:

> Among the early writers of the Christian church, the so-called Fathers or patristic authors, Augustine has by far the largest philosophical significance. He became one of the most influential church leaders, and the most gifted doctrinal systematizer of his time, but his peculiar eminence as a writer lies in the evident power and charisma of his person. The *Confessions*, a portrayal of his life and eventual acceptance of God's authority, is one of the most famous writings of world literature, an uncompromising psychological self-portrait and at the same time an exemplar in the salvation literature of a man's ascent to God. Augustine was originally an adherent of the dualist theology of Manichaeism, and his earliest writings display the heavy influence of philosophical skepticism. Ultimately, though, he came under the influence of the platonic schools, and especially Plotinus, whom he discovered under the tutelage of Gaius Marius Victorinus. In this way he became, after his conversion to Christianity, the quintessential representative of Christian Platonism. The climb of the soul to the heights, as he encountered in the philosophical Gnosticism of Plotinus, is sustained here through a personal experience with God and thus grants to the inner self-assurance of the soul a fundamental significance. The concept of *memoria* steps into the foreground and develops with it an entirely new dimension of interiority (*Innerlichkeit*). Memory and recollection point to an inner infinity of the soul, out of which emerges the entirety of awareness. The Christian mystery of the Trinity, which still remains an irresolvable riddle for the thought of natural philosophy, is illuminated repeatedly through analogies so as to make available the self-experience of the soul. One of the most speculative works of Augustine, the fifteenth book of *De Trinitate*, elaborates variations on such analogies with a profound depth of speculative meaning.

We offer here [in the anthology] the eleventh book of the *Confessions*; it has a special inner coherence because it brings together the autobiographical character that Augustine brings to the entire work with the introduction of a philosophical theme, the question of the being of time. The reason is

given through an account of the Bible: What existed before God created the universe? One realizes immediately that this is not only a question for the Christian creation doctrine but an aporia of philosophical understanding in general. The concept of a temporal beginning for the world, as Kant would finally demonstrate logically, has something self-contradictory about it. One must ask regarding such a beginning, since the reverse question does not hold up, of what there was before the beginning. Aristotle saw the fundamental constitution of time—that every point in time is necessarily a boundary between the past and the future, and that in this, a temporal beginning of time is contradictory in itself, because a point in time is always already determined along with the past lying behind it. However, because time exists only where there is movement, Aristotle deduced that the world is without a beginning—for a Christian thinker this was no solution, since the creation represents a cardinal point of faith. On this account Augustine developed a problematic of the soul, which is brought forward with the question of the being of time itself, the selfsame fleetingness and insubstantiality of time that is made implacable and inescapable for us in the passing away of its reality and being. Time cannot be thought of as a presence in flight from the world but only as an experience of the soul, as an inner awareness of a tension between the future and the past, hope and the irrecoverable. The inner dimension of our temporal awareness, which comprehends the past, the present, and the future, has its genuine ground in the power of the soul to collect itself out of all dispersion and to direct itself toward a necessary unity.

This is a brief account of the dramatic conversation between, on the one hand, Christian interiority, and, on the other hand, the outwardly turning world-concept of ancient thought. If Plotinus still treats the destiny of the soul as aspects of a cosmic drama, its fall into being, and its rise to the origin and to the One, which join it through the knowledge and through the purification of all that is sensible, an emanation out of the One and a return to the One that accounts for the being of all things, then Augustine in a similar way lives in the element of Judeo-Christian thought, teaching that it is the drama of the soul, its distance and proximity to God, which represents the truly real. So he incorporates the entirety of the philosophical world of antiquity into the Christian experience of soul, and becomes in doing so the genuine founder of the Christian philosophy of the Middle Ages.[4]

Even in this school-text outline, Gadamer takes care to bring the little known work of *De Trinitate* to the attention of his young philosophy students. It is a work he mentions all through his life as fundamental to

hermeneutics, despite its virtual absence from the philosophical canon. Its importance to him is its heuristic value as a model of explanation that wrestles with the enigma of discursive human identity in a way that has not been attempted before or since.

But Gadamer chooses a passage from the *Confessions* for his students to read as their first introduction to Augustine instead of the *De Trinitate*. This makes perfect sense because with the autobiographical narrative Augustine makes more accessible the mysteries of faith and the human condition through his own personal life and experience. Yet there is a theme that binds the *Confessions* and the *De Trinitate*—how language sits at the exact center of the mystery of human identity—and this, not coincidentally, is the central borrowing of Gadamer's hermeneutics from the Augustinian corpus. So I want to locate the connection of the linguistic theme between the two works.

The possibility of a structural relation between the Christian awareness of the frailty of the human spirit and the Greek appreciation for its harmony and beauty is fused in Augustine's *Confessions* with the celebrated concept of the distentio animi, described in Gadamer's preface as "an inner awareness of a tension between the future and the past, hope and the irrecoverable," and "the power of the soul to collect itself out of all dispersion."[5] In the *Confessions*, Augustine is torn between two insights. Our lives are fragmented, dispersed, fractured, threatened with incoherence. But he does not deny the human capacity to shape some kind of unity out of this dispersion. He argues for this unifying capacity by cataloging the various mental feats of consolidation—the ability to foresee (*praesensio*) what is not yet, abridge (*contractum*) what is long, fly (*transvolare*) from past to future, follow a complex thought through to completion (*peractus*), and so on.[6] Time is a kind of stretching (*distentionem*), he finally says.[7] Then he comes to the pivotal insight when he asks what it is that is being stretched out: It is the soul, he concludes, *distentionem animi*.[8] From this point on, he never lets go of this concept. However, under the pressure of his interrogation, the word "distentio" shifts about in its meaning. His life is this distentio, he says, "ecce distentio est vita mea," as both a disintegrating and unifying force. He is "gathered up from" his old conversations and his new ones. But temporality is predicated on failure, since he has to forget what he has just heard or seen to follow what comes next.[9] Augustine never removes the tension in this double meaning because it describes effectively the contradiction of the human condition, being neither completely of the one nor of the other. The distentio animi comes to stand for the conflicted nature of the human

soul, threatening always to fall apart but salvaged by a tentative hold on some kind of coherence.

Part of Augustine's struggle is to understand how it is that human nature sits between and navigates these two seemingly contradictory attributes. In the end he hits upon an analogy from rhetoric—the bond between thought and speech. The culminating insight from his exegesis of the distentio animi describes how a speaker recites a psalm from memory, illustrating both the passing away of what is said but also the retaining in memory and anticipation of what is to come: "Suppose a man were about to utter a somewhat long sound of the voice, and in his thoughts should resolve how long it should be; this man hath even in silence already spent a space of time, and committing it to his memory, begins to utter that sound, which continues sounding until it be brought unto the end proposed. Yea, it hath sounded, and will sound."[10] Notice here how time, thought, and language are all interwoven in a kind of seamless unity. The simple recitation illustrates a mysterious capacity to defy the dispersion of temporal being. These connections between the interior of the human mind and the exterior world are the seedbed for the speculative achievements of Augustine's later work, and it will turn out to be of cardinal significance that his breakthrough is accomplished by an analysis of human speech.

De Trinitate

Augustine's pivot to the spoken word as the exemplary manifestation of the double nature of human being—precisely not *dualism* in the sense of the term that Augustine is usually credited with but dualism as the bridge between the divine and temporal orders—is deepened even further in his great work on the Trinity (*De Trinitate*), where he introduces an even more celebrated idea, the metaphor of the *verbum interius* or "inner word." The "inner word" is a phrase that Aquinas would borrow and develop systematically as a way to explain human cognition, but Augustine comes up with the metaphor in the *De Trinitate* as a way to explain the enigma of Trinitarian identity, and the fact that he turns to the analogy with speech for this purpose is no accident.[11] Gadamer does not mention Augustine's inner word in the little preface, but in *Truth and Method* he will identify it as the lodestone of the whole enterprise, so I will explain it here and show how it serves as the bridge concept for the philosophical themes of time, world, and identity.

The theologians of the early Christian church struggled for centuries to establish and justify its unique doctrines of trinity and incarnation. The

genius of Christianity, it may very well be, resides in its insistence on such paradoxes of identity—three persons in one God, a son assuming human weakness without sacrificing his perfection. These two mysteries are sometimes referred to as, respectively, the immanent Trinity and the economic Trinity, the first relating to the eternal relations within the Godhead and the second relating to the unfolding of God's identity in human history through the intercession of the son.[12] The early Christian church's struggle for institutional hegemony, a fierce struggle among many contending sects, went hand in hand with deeply divisive battles over such doctrinal issues. Christian sects contending for ascendancy as the true Roman Catholic Church identified themselves through creedal differences, so that institutional legitimation and doctrinal orthodoxy became intertwined in these confessional variations. The son might be divine or mortal, the three persons might be distinct gods, and the living Church might be the spirit or the history of revelation. The audacious effort of the Roman Catholic Church to craft an identity between the immanent and economic processions, necessarily complex and paradoxical, was perpetually threatened by dualist descriptions of the spiritual and material realms. Augustine's own life demonstrated this conflict, since he was early in his life a follower of Gnostic Manichaeism, only to become later a crusader against such Gnostic tendencies.

In these theological fights, the question of incarnation and Trinitarian identity were tackled separately, but their solutions had to be reconciled with each other, which made the intellectual balancing act all the more complex and difficult. Athanasius lamented: "And how sadly must He misunderstand the great Mystery of the Son's Incarnation, that cannot be reconcil'd to that of his Eternal Generation?"[13] What eventually came to be official dogma—never perfectly stable as contending parties within the church threatened schism over doctrinal differences—was a balancing act that Jaroslav Pelikan called "a theological tour de force."[14] Official doctrine transcended commonsense linear logic and expressed itself in the language of enigma. The Trinity was one God, while Father, Son, and Holy Spirit remained distinct as persons. Christ was equal to the Father in knowledge and power and yet sacrificed himself to become human.

The great struggle for speculative synthesis was aided by the theological appropriation of the pagan Greek concept of logos, a word that had such range and complexity that it accommodated many of the disparate elements of the doctrinal enigmas of identity. Not that the theologians did not already have extraordinary cultural resources for their logos doctrine. The narrative voice of Proverbs is "wisdom," a kind of speaking faith that *preceded* all of

God's creation. Isaiah 55:10-11 provides a remarkable image of the word that anticipates figuratively the Neoplatonic idea of emanation: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth." The Wisdom of Solomon 1:7 proclaims a constitutive relation between world and word: "For the spirit of the Lord filleth the world: and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice." These are scriptural antecedents that were in the air if not also in John's mind when he penned the prologue in John 1:1, 14: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

Authority thus provided the warrant for the mixed term that bridges the realm of the timeless and the material world. This structural flexibility could account for several dimensions of the logical impasse. For instance, the enigma of Trinitarian generation is resolved by analogy with the scriptural fusion of word and being. The immanent Trinity—the unfolding of God's thought as the history of the Church—can be analogized to the inexhaustible generativity of language, as rhetoric had always taught. And indeed this analogy became the formative principle of Protestant doctrine—the promulgation of the word among the faithful as the literal church of Christ. Augustine asks his readers to consider the thoughts of the mind as "a kind of utterance of the heart," referencing the stock of wisdom that we carry with us and bring out in response to the cares of the world. This appeal to the rhetorical concept of the topoi as starting points of argument is a reversal of the conventional correspondence theory that Plato presents in the *Cratylus* and that much modern language theory posits as a progression from thing to thought to word.[15] By contrast, Augustine insists—in line with scriptural precedent and teaching—that there is no pure thought on the other side of the word but rather the word all the way down: "for when we utter something true, that is when we utter what we know, a word is necessarily born from the knowledge which we hold in the memory, a word which is absolutely the same kind of thing as the knowledge it is born from."[16] Now, if the word is fully formed in the heart, the Son may be always already complete and perfect despite his generation from the Father. God is simply "uttering himself" in speaking the Word.[17]

In developing this form of justification, Augustine seems to be just as interested in the human phenomenon as its spiritual analogy. The exploration of the boundaries of language to express the ineffable is turned on

itself, becoming a wonderful interrogation of the nature of speech, metaphor, interiority, representation, and so on. In turning his interest upon the constitution of human knowing, Augustine links his ruminations on the inner word to the Pauline figure of the dark mirror, combining sound and light to analogize the communicability of the divine ("somehow to see him by whom we were made by means of this image which we ourselves are"), and, once he does this, he can turn in either direction, toward the eternal light or toward its mundane reflection.[18] The *verbum cordis* becomes the river crossing between the world of spirit and its material reflection. It sits now at the nexus of all the boundary crossings—the eternal and the temporal, being and becoming, form and matter, space and time—that troubled Augustine's own dualist mind-set, and it provides an audacious ground from which to overcome that dualism, an effort that Gadamer picked up and continued in his own work.

LINGUISTIC BEING AND THE INNER WORD

If we consult experience, it is just as clear that the concept of a realm of pure ideas is fiction. Whatever incipient understanding or wordless vision confronts us, it cannot but sit on a bed of meanings, experiences, associations, symbols, and stories. The ineffable is meaningful because every element of our lives leads up to it, despite the fact that we cannot come to terms with it, and whatever our lives are made of up to that point is invested in that understanding. Even if what is ineffable should beggar the power of language or humble it, the ineffable does not therefore exist in an inarticulate void. Just the opposite, it is replete with and embedded in symbolic resonance and emerges out of that symbolic resonance. The countless meanings of a ringing phone, a banging door, a last light, and their layered combinations suggest how deep any adequate description would have to go beyond what we conventionally mean by language. Gadamer gives voice to this limit when he says famously "being that can be understood is language" (*Sein, das verstanden werden kann, ist Sprache*).[19] Despite this assertion, what Gadamer calls the "limit that resides in the word" is connected in his mind directly to the *verbum interius*. Here is a conversation on the subject with Gadamer when he was in his nineties:

Gadamer: What cannot be understood can pose an endless task of at least finding a word that comes a little closer to the matter at issue.

Grondin: Why [in *Truth and Method*] do you invoke Saint Augustine's doctrine of the inner word in this connection?

> *Gadamer*: Precisely because it took Augustine no less than fifteen books to get closer to the secret of the Trinity without falling into the false way out of Gnostic presumption.[20] This has become a very important point for me, a point which I would emphatically say I must defend. In truth I am not at all talking about a Tower of Babel; that is to say a multiplicity of languages and a confusion of languages is not the problem, one that according to the Old Testament, the tower illustrated and after which man is turned away to his own destiny. In reality, the multiplicity of languages does not represent an insurmountable barrier to the hermeneutical task. Every language is teachable. Thus a person is always capable of overcoming all boundaries [represented by language], when that person seeks to reach an understanding with the other person. Indeed, in the experience of a limit that resides in the word as such one really finds an infinite task.[21]

So Augustine's inner word is not a pure meaning that precedes articulation muddied by the accidents of local language, nor is it a simple idea enriched by cultural difference as it is spoken out. Nor even is it a system of meaning invoked and activated when a singular expression touches the entire web of significations. Its signal character is that it remains caught in an exchange between the whole that it imagines but then adds to, increasing the store of language even before that language can answer its summons to wholeness. The contribution is from both ends in a paradoxical movement that Gadamer gleans from a Trinitarian logic that integrates economic and immanent processions. The inner word signifies an immensity more by its longing than its insight, and its activity carries the pathos of the human condition, "increasing store with loss and loss with store."[22] The inner word is at the intersection not merely of the diachrony and synchrony of language but also of God's will and its realization. The distance between the words we express and our incipient understanding resembles the distance between human history and the love that created it.

We have determined that the inner word is a name for the liminal space between the temporal articulation of the world on the one side and the divine mind on the other, the location of the jointure between God and his creation. The inner word sits on this fault line, looking in both directions. It is the nexus of both a topology and a chronometry, bridging the temporal and timeless being in one dimension, and interiority and exteriority in the other. To continue the visual metaphor, the Trinity in its economy and immanence is the landscape over which the inner word casts its vision, although in a kind of stereoscopic vision, because the Trinity of the persons

comprehends all the other trinities in a series of overlapping relations, and these little trinities are not mere analogues but participants in the larger one.

This stereoscopic vision is not accidental. The human mind, Augustine wants to say, has the capacity to see dimly the Trinity's economy and immanence because the mind has a similar complexity, the ability to "double up, as it were, in order to be both there and here."[23] The mind is more than a simulacrum of the Trinity; it is what medieval theology calls a "similitude." The presence of God within us *is* the temporal translation. Our disjunctive nature has fashioned a fold in the middle—reflection. Being amid times, we can pit one time against the other and, in that juxtaposition, know something about their relation. In its doubling, we mimic God, and although we experience the futility of our longing for perfect knowledge, we have in its stead a kind of promissory note, something darkly visible. Augustine has anticipated Heidegger's reconciliation of Hegelian reflection with the insurmountable structure of human finitude. In fact, as we look back now, we see why Gadamer was so insistent upon looking to Augustine's legacy. The hermeneutic circle in ancient rhetoric was hardly more than a figurative heuristic for textual and legal interpretation until Augustine married it to the metaphysical tradition. The human mimesis of Trinity, with its broken participation, is the way we have into the circle of understanding that traverses mind and world through language.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We have so far spoken about the Trinitarian relation only of the Father and Son, and not of the Holy Spirit. This comes into play with the inversion of the normal relation between intention and utterance, or, in theological terms, between the Father's will and its emanation through the Holy Spirit.[24] The Son does not represent the Father as a mere messenger in an instrumental sense, and the Holy Spirit does not carry out the will of the Father as an adjutant. The structure of their relation, especially as it bleeds over onto the territory of language (word), is brought to bear on the issue of symbolic (re)presentation, which is to say, *Sprachlichkeit*.[25] The theology that Gadamer analogizes when he talks about the concept of representation is not just the logical impertinence of Trinitarianism in insisting on the identity of the one word with the unfolding text of salvation history but also the fact that the second and third person are in no way inferior to the first.

To get at the structure of the relation between idea and its representation, Gadamer appeals, in a long and important footnote in *Truth and*

Method, to an idea that emerged in ancient Roman law under the influence of Christian theology, where the representational role of God's Word carried the entire weight of the mystery of spiritual identity on its shoulders.[26] In Christology, the Logos is simultaneously an emissary of God's will as his only Son, an expression of his being, and his identity without loss. This paradigm filters down into legal thought. In the Roman law courts, a legal representative could serve as a proxy for a person unable to be present—a child for instance—and this representation of personhood had the full force of law. In the process of adjudication within the courtroom, the role of the original and the delegate ("agent") is reversed, since the person being represented is utterly dependent on the autonomous judgment and speech of the legal representative.

An analogous relationship develops in the Renaissance with the cultural function of the official portrait, where the role of the ruler's agency is reversed: "When he shows himself, he must fulfill the expectations that his picture arouses."[27] The portrait does a lot of public work—creating, sustaining, and repairing the ruler's public identity, the source of his power and authority—so that he must now live up to his image. What he does in his rule is to fulfill, backfill, refill the image he has created. The dynamic that is at work in this play of forces is what Gadamer describes as "das Sein einen Zuwachs an Bildhaftigkeit," which might be translated loosely as "the growth of being through discursive formation."[28] The material world of signs and meanings is a reduplicative, interanimated, reciprocal process in which meaning has no strict point of origin outside of the process and in fact moves *toward* its own being, reversing both the temporal logic and the direction of adequation—"to be for the first time fully what it is."[29]

Historically, it is not Neoplatonism proper, but Neoplatonism transformed by Christology that yields the conceptual theory of hermeneutic recognition at work in the portrait. The Greek fathers "regarded the incarnation of God as a fundamental acknowledgment of the worth of visible appearance, and thus they legitimated works of art."[30] Christology, in the way that it works out the relationship between idea and embodiment on the model of the incarnation, provides a theoretical counter to essentialism. The economic procession brings the relation of form and matter closer together than previous historical paradigms, and the appropriation of Trinitarianism by German philosophy follows from this relation. The point won for a theory of language is that this analogy flips the conventional relation of sign and signifier on its head.

The representative, the portrait, the linguistic expression are not the reflection of some original meaning, but a constituting pole of living meaning. In a sense, the relation works backwards, from *Darstellung* to *Dargestellte*, *Bild* to *Ur-bild*, appearance to meaning:

> The way the ruler, the statesman, the hero shows and presents himself—this is brought to presentation in the picture. What does this mean? Not that the person represented acquires a new, more authentic mode of appearance through the picture. Rather, it is the other way around: it is *because* the ruler, the statesman, or the hero must show and present himself to his followers, because he must represent, that the *picture* acquires its own reality.[31]

The ontological structure of representation is processive, which means it oscillates back and forth between "copy" and "original." These terms (copy/original) have lost their conventional meaning in the course of the analysis or, rather, have become inadequate, since it is only in the (re)presentation that the thing in itself comes to be. To say "Das Bild ist ein Seinsvorgang" means not only that the image is a process, which is radical enough on its own, but that being is a process, since the idea of the person represented is caught up in the act of representation.[32] This theory of representation, a theory that I think it is fair to say, in the discourses of linguistics or philosophy of language or aesthetics, is genuinely revolutionary, borrows from patristic theology to stand conventional thinking about language on its head.

CONCLUSION

Whenever you suspect you are hearing oversimplified versions of Gadamer's theory of hermeneutic understanding, you have only to recall his dependence on Augustine's Trinitarian thought to be reminded of the radicality behind it. Just as Augustinian inwardness is not a retreat from the world but a middle passage between immanence and transcendence, so hermeneutics navigates between essentialism and nominalism toward a restless dialectic of phenomenal meaning. Just as the insufficiency of language in Augustine is not a refrain of the topos of the ineffable but an incitement to ask always more, so hermeneutic dialogue sees determinate meaning perpetually withdrawing to a far horizon. When Augustine models human temporality on the procession of the Trinity, he shows hermeneutics how the circle of meaning is to be ontologized and how its effects work backward and forward, the world fulfilling the meaning of the word, the word filling with

the meaning of the world (*Wechselwirkungen*). Indeed, Augustine transcends hermeneutics as he continues to address those who desire to understand what it means to hear and to speak and to understand what a word is.

7

Self-Identity and Time

Algis Mickūnas

Numerous thinkers have suggested that if we could understand time, we would understand everything, and in numerous metaphors time is given the awesome power to rule over the destinies of all things, humans and divinities. Whether recognized explicitly or lived tacitly, time is an a priori condition of continuity, disruption, and transformation of events across the vast reaches of galaxies and their emergence and demise. Different civilizations offer different interpretations of time, from cyclical through linear all the way to relative, but the question that remains unanswered is how humans can access time in awareness. After all, we can have some consensus concerning the ways we come to know things and their characteristics, but time is not a thing to be discovered by sending an expedition to the North Pole or to Mars. And yet we speak of it as if it were an obvious presence. This very obviousness shocked Augustine when he began to reflect upon it and found it to be totally obscure, if not nigh mysterious, specifically in light of his new discovery of the metaphysics of Being as articulated by others before him, including the great classical thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle, who pondered the issue of time (as change) and its connection to the problem of nonbeing—does time really exist?

Despite the ambiguity of the issue, it is Augustine who found the question of nothing and time-change to be intimately connected with the question of Being—although in specifically metaphysical terms, expressed in a personalized tribal metaphor as God. The task of this essay is to explicate why time, for Augustine, is "located" in the soul and, later, why time awareness, for Husserl, constitutes the basic problematic of transcendental subjectivity without the question of Being. Both men offer a transcendental

debate of the issue of and a quest for "ultimate awareness" that allows any variant of speculative metaphysics and their cultural (tribal-divine) expressions to make sense. While there are numerous texts of Augustine's and Husserl's time analyses—and indeed numerous controversies—in this essay such controversies shall be set aside, since the issue is with Being and time, or, to speak with the major figure Eugen Fink, who has articulated the philosophical issue of Being and time, as Being and world-cosmos.[1]

In this sense the Augustinian issue of Being is related to the changing world, such that the latter is perched on the edge of "nonbeing." As a matter of historical hermeneutic, the Augustinian discussion of Being in relationship to time and nothing frames the problematic of Heidegger's understanding of human existence as exposed to nothingness, nonbeing, because of human temporality. Sartre is not far behind, arguing that future, as our projects toward possibilities, is nothing—that is, time awareness is equated with nonbeing. While in this essay Augustine's and Husserl's theses will be preeminent, they frame the most fundamental philosophical questions. One such question, on which this essay will focus, is the "self-identity" and continuity of the subject, soul, or self. This question is urgent in light of the various trends of "thought" concerning the deconstruction of presence, and thus identity, and of the death of the subject and author, all premised on a silent assumption of the passage of time. Augustine's struggle with the issue of time is coextensive with the quest to understand the soul's continuity and self-identity, while Husserl's "investigations" of self-identity lead to the problematic of Self and Ego.

THE AMBIGUITY OF SOUL

In the context of so many explications and interpretations of Augustine's treatment of time, this essay will focus first on the reason for time's "location" in the soul. And the reason is precisely the ontological status of changing cosmos with respect to Being, status of Being and beings, and the status of soul that is between them. The soul may turn to Being and grow or remain among beings and diminish (*magis esse* and *minus esse*). If the soul reaches out toward Being, it becomes stable or permanent, especially when it obtains Being, and if it turns away from Being it becomes less, leads toward nothingness, and even becomes "nihilated" (*tendere ad nihilum*, *inanescere*). Using his accepted personalized tribal imagery for the understanding of Being, he suggests that the soul, wherein resides time, is a place of decision to move either to Being or nothing. A person who selects

terrestrial pleasures, material or bodily happiness, the taste of sensuality, will to dominate, and curiosity selects also the nihilation, as expressed in the turn toward the changing and impermanent world, toward nothing. In contrast, a person who turns to edification or, more appropriately to the focus of this essay, solidification and constancy of the self, decides to turn toward Being. When the soul turns toward what is less than Being, it turns toward the nothingness of the created universe.

Although numerous texts point out that Augustine turned to philosophy, and above all to the philosophy of Plato—indeed calling Platonic doctrine the only perfectly true philosophy—and thus in it discovering "another world" distinct from the world of senses, a world of perfection of Being, it would not be true to say that he engaged the entirety of this philosophy, since Plato's was not a quest for Being, as a primary concern, but a quest to discover and articulate the basic *gene* that lends intelligibility to all things, forms, and beings: these *gene* are permanence/change, same/difference, and finally being, but without giving being any preeminence to the latter over the other *gene.* But Augustine, lending priority to stability, attaches that quality as a primary characteristic of Being. In this sense, by adhering to temporal things, which are carried away toward extinction or nothingness, the soul is mistaken about its wanting to be (*esse uelle*). It can have Being only if it accepts its true status as turning to what is absolutely stable—the Abrahamic divinity. While the "Platonic books" are a catalyst for an entry into the realm of "changeless Being," such a Being had to be personalized to satisfy Augustine's search for an eternal rest, stability, and permanence of his soul.

> Let my soul praise thee for all these beauties, oh God, you their creator, but let it not allow the corporeal senses to attach it to them by the trap of love. For they go where they have always gone, toward nothingness . . . for the created beings are not stable, they slip away. . . . Entrust Truth with all that you hold from it and you will lose nothing . . . all that was unsteady in you will be restored, renewed, closely unified and will no longer drag you toward the bottom but will remain stable with you next to God who always remains stable.[2]

This divinity alone truly is. No arguments will be introduced as to the ontological status of things—are they nothing? It is not clear whether Augustine claimed that things come and pass into nothing or whether materiality itself remains. The only relevance for their immediacy to nothing is their contingency, corruptibility, and above all mutability: they come and pass

and as a result are less than the immutable, eternal Being. If materiality continues, then the question of things coming and passing is the question of time and thus of its ontological status: Does it have any, even if lesser being than Being itself, or is it the very threat that not having any claim to being is the ground of coming and passing of things—their nihilation?

A brief consideration is in order of the way that the soul—as spiritual creation—can continue to be even if it has not initiated its tendency toward Being and thus remains only as tendency toward the things of this world (i.e., does not know Being). After all, if the soul tends toward the corruptible, does it not end in passing away as all mutable things do? The tendency toward the immutable Being, who created the soul, means that it is eternal too and hence cannot be corrupted—unless the soul is divided in two. But a spiritual being cannot be divided; it is not made of parts. Since with Augustine the issue is raised in the context of speculative metaphysics, expressed in the imagery of stories of one tribe, then a legitimate question concerns the status of the being of the soul of those who were completely immersed in this corruptible world, themselves completely corrupted, having never heard of the stories of some eternal Being-God—did their souls vanish, or is it the case that they escaped time and continue to be? Augustine suggests that a soul cannot be completely bereft of its form without ceasing to be a soul, and hence what a soul is can never become anything else, even disappear.[3] But more importantly, Augustine introduces a factor—the "wanting to be" that will "reveal" what is the soul's ultimate quest and what comprises immortality. The limit of this promise is reached when one chooses death over life, thinking that one will annihilate oneself and reach nothing. For Augustine, the image of complete destruction is only a surface manifestation of the natural tendency toward rest, toward permanence, toward an increase in being.[4]

As was noted above, there is, in the soul, a tendency either to diminish in being, manifested in the attachment to fleeting, contingent, and mutable things, or to increase in being in the attachment to wisdom and ultimate truth that is one with Being. To be one with Being is total rest, permanence, immutability. Thus the person who is unhappy with the attachment to all the shifting panorama of this world and wants to be free from it is, unbeknownst to him, making a choice for eternal happiness with the permanent presence of Being and reaching for the soul's immutability. Augustine insists on the point of the will to stability as a will to be and finally to be with Being. Man is infinitely superior to the rest of creation because he *wants to be*, and thus even the wanting for the changing things is a wanting

to be—even if in a lesser way. But the more a human yearns for Being, the more he or she yearns for eternal life; this yearning allows one not to tie oneself to *temporal* possessions, for before existing, they are not; by existing, they pass; and once they have passed, they will no longer be. Thus when they are to come, they are not yet, when they have passed, they no longer are. How can one make something remain which only begins to be in order not to be? To love what passes makes one scattered, while to love what remains will lead to strength, stability, and possession of Being. Thus, willing to be in the fullest way is also a willing to be edified by what is supreme and eternal, and, in the final analysis, only the latter will prevent the human from being dragged by the inferior things toward the fall into nothingness.[5]

There is, nonetheless, a major ambiguity concerning the concept of the soul and its relationship to Being and nothing. Augustine accepts the fable that, at first, man was participating in his creator's essence and lived in total and eternal happiness. But then there was a "fall" as a "choice" for lesser, inferior being. A fall toward nonbeing is what defines the body, and resultantly the soul is led toward nothingness. But the bodily world cannot be denied—after all, it is created and must exist as an image of the creator, and thus, to save the day, Augustine pronounces that

> the soul, which, by voluntary distancing, separates from Him who has made it, in whose essence it used to find its joy, and which wants to find its joy in bodies, contrary to God's law, which has made it superior to them; this soul turns toward nothingness. What is significant, at this level, is that at the center of the soul is will, and the will wants what is eternal, but it seeks the eternal in nothing. That is the sin, not that the body per se is nothingness.[6]

How does one account for this turning toward nothingness? If the soul seeks what its essence requires, then the turning toward the contingent world must be a matter of mistake—the soul thinks that in this world it will find fulfillment. In this sense, it wills in accordance with its essence but is mistaken as to what will fulfill the requirements of this essence. The soul seeks constancy and eternity but does not find it in this world. This implies that humans remain with their ontological "hunger" for eternity as being with Being but fail by making a wrong choice. But such a choice is more than a falling toward nothingness; the soul fell in love with its own powers and thus went far from Being and failed to remain with itself. This is to say it pushed away and outside of itself; it begins to love the world, *to love what is subjected to time.* At this level appears an intimation of the soul's splitting

from itself into externality, into being other than itself, of forgetting itself and, yet, attempting to remain, by the creator's grace, a continuous essence as soul. Yet the soul keeps diminishing by becoming "not itself," by becoming the other than itself. The question is, how is this possible if the soul continues to be and yet shifts toward nothing, toward a complete otherness than itself? To come closer to nothingness is to participate in "the other life," the life of this world.

CONTINGENCY AND SOUL

Augustine must, finally, confront "this world" that is contingent and mutable and, finally, answer the riddle that allows him to constantly appeal to nonbeing, to nihilation, and he is compelled to secure the soul's essence against the time of this world. The securing requires recognition that the soul was not "with itself," that it was "scattered" among the sensuous "joys" of this world, that it was scattered in the world's time. The latter, nonetheless, is what comprises the ground for the possibility of nonbeing and the ambiguity that allows the soul to make a mistake in choosing the "things" of this world. It is Husserl, as will be evident subsequently, who attempts to account for the possibility of the "scattering" of the self and the way the latter can be one with what has been scattered. Augustine's concern with time is well justified, since it compels him to ask about time with respect to the very core of the soul's self-recognition and the threat to its continuity as self-identical. Since Augustine places the entire burden on the soul as being between the immutability of Being and the mutability and tendency toward nonbeing of this world, and since by essence the soul "wants to be," then it is precisely the "temporality" of this world that subtends the problem of nonbeing. This problematic, explicated by Augustine in terms of the soul's being with its own essence, being self-identical, is what led Husserl to offer minute analyses of the problematic of self-identity of the transcendental subject.

This is the justification for introducing Husserl insofar as he was "dramatically" cognizant of the possibility or impossibility of maintaining a coherent, continuous, and identical subject across the subject's self-temporalizations—without dissipating into an ontological past. And here appears the problem of the ontological status of the being of time. Does it have being as "something," or is it precisely that it shows up without offering any "characteristic" that would be equivalent to any properties ascribed to things? This is to say, if things have being, have recognizable characteristics, even if contingent and passing, then can time, which has no characteristics,

have being? To deal with this question, it is necessary to address it in terms of Augustine's "location" of time in the soul and why such a location not only does not destroy the soul but even secures its permanence against the ontological time.

The answer to this question is offered in terms of soul's confrontation with itself and its immediate efforts to remain itself: "And in my memory too I meet myself—I recall myself, what I have done, when and where and in what state of mind I was when I did it."[7] Indeed, the moment of memory, as meeting oneself, is crucial to Augustine because the very essence of thinking is the principle of the soul and because the very ambiguity of the soul is its self-understanding. As he states, "In fact I cannot grasp all that I am. Thus the mind is not large enough to contain itself."[8] The grasping of self leads Augustine to the question of memory and to its ambiguity of having either an image or the things: "In memory are all such things as we have learned of the liberal sciences and have not forgotten . . . and of these I have not the images but the things themselves. For what grammar is or the art of disputation, how many kinds of questions there are—whatever I know of such matters is in my memory, not as though I have retained the image and left the thing outside."[9] His explication of the "thing" is an effort to account for both memory and the presence of the remembered thing and not its image. This "uncertainty" between the thing as "being outside" and the image in memory evokes a question whether what humans remember is still present in memory or is an image, a representation, of what has passed and vanished. It is clear that, in either case, it is impossible to remove memory, because without memory the question of image or representation would not arise, and neither would there be thought. The very thought about oneself is the history of oneself and thus the condition for his analyses of these issues in *Confessions*—the latter is a partial history and thought of Augustine.

In one sense, thinking and thought are connected not only to memory but also to the soul's time. After all, to have any thought about oneself is both to have a presence of thinking and to have thought, the thinking soul and the thought about itself at which the thinking "arrives." But if it arrives, then it arrives from some distance, in temporal case it could be from the past or the future. As pointed out above, everything in this world comes and passes, is contingent, impermanent, and in principle temporal, and apart from the divine magic that does not allow things to disappear completely, everything would pass into nothing. Thus, what remains of the past must be in the soul, and what is not yet must also depend on soul's ability to "expect" something to come. This is where the fundamental issue begins as

to the way that things remain in the soul after their passing toward nothing. At this juncture, the ontological time is "transcended" by the soul's awareness of time that is not affected by the world. Augustine, and more recent commentators, place emphasis on "memory," specifically as it relates to the presence of itself to itself. As was cited above, memory is where one stores images, the entire life of experience and thought; some can be recalled on demand with ease and without any confusion in their order, while others are lost. The interior space of the soul is vast, such that in silence and darkness one would see light and taste honey. In memory, the sky, sea, and land are available, and there I also meet myself. Indeed, the self is itself the memory. As Greta Austin suggests, we know ourselves by remembering. Memory guarantees our continuity and hence it precludes our dissolution into the unrecoupable past.[10] This is stated more emphatically by James J. O'Donnell, to whom memory, which is in some sense the self, is the place in which the self experiences itself. Memory is not only a storage place of images; it is a passive faculty on which intellect and will exercise their forces. It is the locus of the self, the force that links present with past and gives identity. We cannot be ourselves without the house of memory. Mind, conscious of itself in the present moment, does not quite exist—because to be conscious is to be conscious in memory and not really in the present.[11]

While such proclamations are part of Augustine's and his interpreters' positions, they pose philosophical issues that cannot be avoided—issues that must be closely explicated to find a tentative resolution to the perplexing questions of the constant naming of things and this world as moving toward nothing, of placing self-awareness in memory, and finally of time. No doubt, it might seem that naming "memory" is equivalent to past time, but under closer scrutiny that does not seem to be the case, specifically when the discussion and interpretations focus on the contents given in the soul and memory. The "location" of time in the soul does not mean that the soul itself is ontologically temporal; after all, Augustine is not willing to place the soul on the brink of extinction—even in cases when the soul has never encountered the absolutely immutable and eternal Being. Indeed, if the self is continuing as memory, then self-identity can be prolonged indefinitely and the threat of nihil avoided. In this sense, time is "covered over."

While this extension of the self beyond the present is interesting, there is an ontological question concerning the ambiguity that appears with the distinction between things as such and their images: which are present in memory? Augustine seems to maintain that memory contains the things and not their images, and it even contains the self. Thus the question is

whether anything passes if it is still present in the soul—and indeed at present. There is nothing to suggest that what is in the memory is in a temporal past, specifically if the things are given in memory as they are themselves. This is counter to the ontological claim that things—trees, animals, flowers, and sundry others—come into being and pass; after all, it would be strange to say that the presently perceived tree, while it is passing, remains in memory as if it were given in perception. The tree must pass into past and vanish, providing an opening for the other option—where memory does not contain the things as they are, but rather their images. If this is the case, then the images are present in memory and must be present to the soul at present. This means that the images do not indicate any other temporal status apart from being present as images of. . . . Whatever the "of" suggests does not yet have any temporal clues: someone may have an image of his mother but not suggest any presence of time, and yet as soon as he says the image is of *my mother the way she was eleven years ago*, he discloses the presence of a distance between the image and mother—a distance that has no characteristics of anything, no ontological status. This sudden opening of the distance, indicating that the mother is gone and only the present image of her remains, allows for the difference between the soul's "time" and the nihilating ontological time.

As immutable, in what way does the soul maintain its self-identity and continuity? It was noted above that the self is memory, that the self finds itself in memory, and that the self does not quite exist in the present, and to be conscious of itself is to be in memory. As good as this sounds, the underlying logic is the presence of the present and the shifting away from it. To say that the self is not quite "at the present" is both to accept it and to maintain that there is a movement away from it—into memory. The self must recognize itself at present and as no longer at present, and this "no longer" at present is a temporal distance that is immediately bridged by the identity between the present self and its being the same in memory. The sameness is a guarantee that the self is permanent and that the memories of what the self was, did, and thought are all present as belonging to the same self. Thus the threat of nihilation present with ontological time, if time were instead to appear as the dimension without the characteristics of anything, would be covered over and abolished. Indeed, strictly speaking, the soul avoids time altogether: the soul cannot see "images" of time because time has no visible or audible characteristics, even if Augustine points to the phenomenon of speaking about the future and about the past. His language is ambiguous since, according to him, those who speak of the future or the past

must see them in some way, since one can only see what is. Whatever is seen of the past and the future in the soul assumes some kind of *being of the seen* because something that is *not* simply cannot be seen, even in the soul: what we see about the past and foresee about the future must in some way be.

Thus Augustine finally asks the decisive question: if the something seen in the past and the something foreseen in the future *are*, then I wish to know *where* they are. At first, the question deals with the place of the something foreseen in the future or recalled from the past. It must be pointed out that Augustine does not make a sharp distinction between the something of the future and the future and the something of the past and the past. This means that in the soul they cannot be as past and future since the things of the world come and pass into past and thus no longer are: they must, then, have a presence in the soul without coming and passing, and the presence is the images of what is to come and what has passed. What remains are their images, including the images of what is expected, and thus planning and deliberation concerning the coming activities. This suggests that deliberation is present in the soul and that what is being deliberated is equally present, not as a specific ontological "now," but as the soul's continuous identity with itself. After all, the expected things are not yet, and thus the future does not exist—it is nothing, while the images in the soul of what is expected are not affected by the nonbeing of the future; there is only the presence of the soul that escapes the coming and passing of things and the condition of this coming and passing—time, that is, the nihilating, uncanny dimension.

The "where is time" question has taken on a very different meaning. The ontological question of time and its being is circumvented in favor of a time awareness in the soul that is different from the ontological problem. Despite the claims that it is not the image but the thing that is contained in memory, it is now obvious that it is the image, distinct from the thing, that remains and is equally a guarantee of the soul's presence to itself in expectation and in memory. On this account, the soul contains not the nihilating ontological time but its own self-identical continuity through both expectations and memory.

Augustine makes a distinction between two kinds of future to which we relate in expectation. One is future events of nature—the sunset that we can predict by the laws of nature and past experience. But when we deal with our own activities and preplanning, we cannot base our notion of the future on the law of causality or past experience since we are not confronting our experience of the future, such as a sunset. Hence we introduce things into our deliberation as present images that are distinct from the expected thing. In this way, we do not have a future but the images that are present in the soul.

Augustine stresses that whatever is seen as present in the soul is. But whatever is present is not future. How then can we speak of the future? When we preview the future, we do not perceive it as present, since it is not present but future; we only see the causes or signs of the future (*causa vel signa*) which are present. On the basis of such causes and signs, we grasp the future, while such causes and signs are given to perception at the present. And the images in the soul at the present constitute the basis for a prevision of the future. Here we must differentiate between the perceptually given causes and signs at the present of the future and the images or representations in the soul at the present of the future. The causes and signs are "outside," while the representations are in the soul. The perception of the dawn is the external ground for our imagination of the sunset. The dawn and the image of the sunset are present, while the sunset, to which the dawn points and which is an image, is present as an aspect of the soul. The images of an expected something are present in the soul and, as images, represent something, but strictly speaking they do not represent time, whether it is future or past; after all, neither can be present as an image since neither has any characteristics. In this sense, the soul has no time, and its continuity and self-identity cannot undergo temporal changes. Hence, the talk of things coming and passing toward nothing is an ontological question of time as the final dissolver of things—the ultimate threat that is avoided only by dint of the soul's continuity through its identity with images "as expectations" or images that are "recalled." Indeed, the continuity of soul as self-identical is embellished by an addition of the "wanting to be," which is identical not only to continuity but also to final rest, to stability, and to immutability. It seems, then, that the soul, in principle, is not in danger of dissolution—even if it gets "scattered"—but would be in danger only if it were totally part of the ontological, all-nihilating, time. Having gone through various efforts to explicate ontological time, Augustine ends up encasing the soul into its own "time" that is different from this mutable, contingent, and ultimately temporal world.

The "torturous" analysis reveals, finally, the presence of the soul that has no location in the ontological time that threatens everything with nihilation. The language of expectation and memory as premised on time is indicative of the soul's self-identity and presence beyond any ontological "present." After all, what is expected of the future in the image and what is remembered of the past, retained as images, are given as presence, allowing the soul to maintain its permanence, its "rest" or immutability. Thus, the mentioned claim that the soul is in excess of itself makes sense. Because of the kind of "time in the soul," the soul has its immeasurable presence. It can be said that the

"activity" of the soul in expectations and memories is a way of maintaining its identity and permanence. Hence the soul's essence is the maintaining of its permanent self-identity, despite the threatening question of the ontological status of time—most likely being the presence of nothing. If the soul is "active," including deliberative activity, the question must be raised whether various activities of the "self" can maintain its self-identity. Following the impetus of Augustine's quest to wrestle with the ontological question of time and ending with the soul's self-awareness in terms of its own presence to itself by way of expectations and memories, Husserl raises the question of the "transcendental disclosure" of time awareness, specifically in the context of self-identity.

TRANSCENDENTAL SELF-AWARENESS AND TIME

Husserl's phenomenological method is by now well known, even if controversial, and need not be repeated one more time. At the outset of his lectures on time, Husserl delimits the appropriate sphere of temporal phenomena by the complete exclusion of every assumption, stipulation, and conviction with respect to objective time (the total exclusion of all transcending—internal and external—presuppositions concerning what exists). For Husserl, a rigorous phenomenological analysis of time begins not with the "awareness of time" but with the description of time awareness. His phenomenology of internal time consciousness is thus the exhibition of immanent time as the flow of consciousness, not the time of the experienced world. Immanence or internal time consciousness is not the same as Augustinian notions of soul, since for Husserl, soul is one of the worldly, existing objects that transcends consciousness and is thus bracketed with the rest of existing things of the world.

Given this methodological decision that distinguishes his investigations of time awareness, Husserl insists that time, as it is immediately given, is "lived" or a "living" present. The latter cannot be bracketed without a contradiction and thus must comprise a point of departure. This departure is best explicated by Klaus Held.[12] The living present manifests two fundamental moments: the flowing and the static. While enacting the flow, the self is confronted with the missing aspect—the permanent. The permanent is excluded from, and yet is referred to by, the flow. While flowing, the self is engaged in countering a stasis. However, while the self assumes a position of permanence, it is referred to a flow. The standing forever battles the flux. While being exclusive, neither can be given without the other. They are mutually referent. What is at issue in the quest for self and its identity

with respect to time awareness is the access to these two moments of the living present and their most diverse relationships. It is to be noted that the relationship between permanence and flux is never given in its purity; it is always mediated by symbolic designs of a given culture, including Augustine's notion of soul. Thus in the questions concerning self and ego, those two terms will comprise symbolic tandems of the two basic facets of the living present.

First, there is the problem of the primordial, passive stream, the "Heraclitean flow" as fundamental domain of awareness, for whose constitutive moments we lack names; there is nothing found in the flow that would be an objective identity. Names, after all, apply only to the constituted identities, to objectified sense units.[13] Such units, such identities, rudimentary components of reference, are discovered only in reflection that traces something constituted in the flux, such as an identity of a color, a sound, a trace of smell, a number, or an ego. All may find themselves and be seen as identical or constant in the flow. They are apparent as stasis moments. Does an ego, at this level of awareness, also appear in the flow as selfsame or identical? A note of caution must be added: the self that symbolizes the enactment of the flow does not encounter the permanent ego by reflection but by the very composition of the flow that immediately calls up its mutual and yet exclusive referent—the stasis. At this level, the moment of stasis can only be constituted as a recognizable act of the self that is flowing away and is given a symbolic designation—ego. The ego marks a distance between the acting self and its own enactments. In their static identifiability, the latter refer to the flux enacted by the self and exhibit a characteristic that is different from and exclusive of the self. This context suggests that the self cannot be exhausted in the identifiable act that is symbolized as an act of an ego. And yet, the ego is present as a reflected self prior to an act of reflection. The self recognizes, in the ego, one of its already accomplished acts. The identity of the self that enacts the flow is not that of the ego as a stasis—a stasis that can be discovered in the flow. In this sense, the self is not reducible to a nameable ego or even to a recognizable act of the self.[14] The self that constitutes the flow is anonymous, and its anonymity cannot be eradicated by reference to an ego found in the flux. The problem, thus, emerges concerning the access, if any, to the primordially acting self. It was noted that the presence of the experienced ego in the flow to the experiencing self reveals a distance between them, a distance that is the very condition of such an experience. This distance must be understood within the limits of the living present and its two self-referring constituents. This present cannot be understood in an

ordinary (i.e., ontological or psychological) sense; the present of the self is not given on the basis of a presupposed temporal position. A radical reflection also excludes the preconception of temporal succession. The present of the self, its presence, could be called Ur-modal, atemporal, or originary.[15] Any temporal regard requires an identifiable point of reference appearing in the flow of awareness. If the ego marks the first identifiable act in the flow, then the distance between the self and the ego is equally atemporal. At this level of awareness, there are no traces of any memory that would hint at temporal locations.

Temporal locations emerge not with the passive constitution of the flux but with an active engagement of the self that, in the first instance, attempts to identify itself with the ego. Thus, this very effort positions the ego in relation to either something that has been done as an act of the self or something that is to be done. Here emerge the overlapping distancing phases which provide a ground for subsequent locations of the ego and the distinction between acts of memory and expectation. If the flow is structured temporally, then the active engagement of the self already takes for granted the distance between itself and the ego. This is such that the enactment of temporal phases intimates tacitly a rule of self-awareness. This rule can be called permanence maintenance. By constituting the temporal phases, the self maintains the distance *from* and the identity *of* the ego. In turn, this suggests that the enactment of the flow, as having temporal phases and ego locations, may be seen as sense making. The latter is the first mode of awareness that is premised on temporalization, since sense is a basic expression of directionality. Experience without directionality lacks sense. In other words, temporalization is coextensive with sense making. Regardless of the linguistic designation, the originary activity of the self is the source of sense. Thus the self is traceable as the endlessly reiterable "this makes sense" and is granted in correlation to temporalization that establishes locations in the stream of lived awareness. Yet, any reflection on sense making, on the primal function of the self, reveals it as a located ego in the context of temporal phases. In the very enactment of the flow, the self is traceable as the source of the sense of this enactment in an atemporal mode. The ego is different and distant from the self. The tracing of the present of the self reveals it to be an atemporal presence of sense making in transformation—a transformation that is a permanent enactment of sense-making flow—a transformation that nonetheless appears as an identifiable ego, in a context of already structured atemporal phases.

This analysis yields evidence of the life of the self as constant stasis in flux. The best that can be attained is its constant self-reference from another—from a stream that contains the traces of the original enactment of sense. Thus, the insight into the sense of temporal phases (prior to temporal loci) and simultaneous reflectivity that reveals the self as an ego leads phenomenology to experience its ultimate, critical, and apodictic foundation.[16] According to this experience, the temporalizing self is grasped as already temporalized ego. This is adequate to the extent that we regard the ego in the flux of temporal phases as a trace of the self, as enacting the permanent sense making that is present in all the differentiations of and locations in the flux.

At this juncture, we encounter the first layer of self that is involved with the distancing ego not as a mere sinking away but as a mark of identifiable permanence that must be maintained and enhanced. Thus, the first rule relating the self and the ego is permanence maintenance. Yet this rule also opens the possibility of marking a temporal locus for memory of any object and for the sense of otherness. Marking a "temporal" distance from the self, the ego is a condition for reflection. At the same time, and despite the gap and hence a division, a mutual reference between them ought not to be lost. To reflect, the self must refer to the ego in the flow of temporal phases not by becoming one with it but by maintaining its permanence. While reflective reference is adequate to establish the identity of the ego, it is inadequate to provide self-identity of the flux-enacting self. In what sense can the functioning, the acting, self obtain its identity from the encountered ego as a distancing in the flux? Is the just-enacted given as an ego or is the just-enacted given merely as an act? If it is given as an ego of a particular act, then the currently reflecting and acting self is more than the just enacted ego. The former contains all the possibilities of enactment of sense, while the latter is exhausted in the act that is attributed to it. But if the just-enacted is an act, then it cannot be fully identifiable with the currently acting and reflecting self, since the self is reflecting from the just-performed act. Here appears an asymmetry between them. Such asymmetry is a condition, both for distancing and even for disassociating from the ego.

While this is a condition for dissociation of the self from an ego, and indeed from a variety of egos, it is equally a structural condition for the possibility of the self to collapse into an ego and to become dissociated from the self. The latter possibility can occur when the currently sense-making self is no more than the sense-making act that is flowing away, and in this

flow it can be attached either to the self or to the ego. In this sense, an equivalence appears between the self and the flowing ego. Even if there is no guarantee of their identity, this equivalence constitutes the basic condition for surrendering any priority of the self over any specific ego. This condition results in the self that is identical to a set of dissociated egos. Such an array of egos appears as a normal state of affairs in our social understanding. We play different roles in different settings and become the sum of our social roles: who we are, thus, depends on our role models. This intimates that the self has become ineffective in integrating the various activities and the various egos attached to such activities. This is a place where Augustine would recognize the way that the self gets "scattered" and lost, holding on to one, then another, and then many other identities that are "other" than the self or soul. This mode of self-scattering could be called permanence disruption.

How can such a scattering be overcome? It appears that the self that is reflecting from the ego grasps itself as acting. For the reflecting self, the distance between the act being performed and the just-enacted is seen as bridged. Reflection experiences unity in separation, identity in difference. The reflecting unification with itself, constituting the experience of bridging the distance and keeping an identity of itself at the present, is given since the self enacts a constant streaming. The possibility of self-reflection emerges on the basis of the constancy of streaming, as well as on the basis of the streaming constancy of the self as it is traced by the ego. In inner reflection, the self has unified itself with the ego and bridged this distance in its streaming. This is the originary passive and active constitution where the transitory synthetic presencing of the self to its egological traces occurs. Thus all inner reflection is self-presencing of the originary functioning self before temporalization. In the transitional synthetic unification of the living present, the self connects with itself before this unity is grasped in reflection. The preaccomplished presencing of the self in its traces is the self-actualizable reflectivity of the self with respect to its own egological traces. As Gerhard Brand states, it is the functioning of "reflection in inception."[17]

The dynamic of the living present is experienced as atemporal preaccomplishment of passive and active transitional syntheses that are equivalent to self-presencing. Thus, in each recouping reflection, the self of the pretemporal living present encounters itself as the streaming, self-temporalizing stasis traced in the ego. There is no self-presence that is not presencing and thus self-presencing. In this sense, the self is never a pure self, never a pole without a distancing objectivity. The self has itself as an object and as a sense of first transcendence, otherness, such that a pure self requires

self-transcendence and a self-tracing in the ego. The notion of a self that constantly establishes a stream of conscious life is relativized to the extent that all direct awareness requires a *sense* of the other. This sense is the first experiential moment that allows us to grasp the world as transcendence, as different from the experiencing self. The latter is recognized with a sense of otherness within the very composition of the self. The very distancing of the ego from the self and their partial unification opens the sense of the ego as temporal and worldly and yet as an index to the enactment of the flow of the self.

This state of awareness is explicated as the always and already pregiven ground of the history of self.[18] History of the self is located at the level of first distancing and breaking out of immediate self and establishment of self as other. In other words, the prereflective synthesis as traced with the primordial flow of the ego and its constitution of the ground for differentiation is at the same time a constitution of the history of the self. One must note that this history is not yet in time; rather, it is the basic condition that allows subsequent locations of activities and other egos. All this is prior to any objectified mediation: the self is present to itself in a reflective form without becoming objective, without mediation.[19] But still one can point out that this already shows a presence of objectifying distance; the very naming of reflection distorts immediacy and assumes a differential field.[20]

The difficulties in the delimitation of the anonymous and atemporal life of awareness come to the fore with respect to time. Since all temporal designations originate with traditional metaphysics and ontology, they not only fail to enlighten but are most misleading. Hence, it is necessary to exclude various temporal preconceptions. Both the theoretical (linear and psychological) polar cyclical constructs of time ought to be avoided, as well as their opposites, eternity and duration. Also, the various spatial and linear metaphors and mythical regions are to be bracketed. What is left consists of such possibilities as "everywhere and nowhere," fixed once and for all as "all time" or "all temporality," and "all temporality of the identical being as the universality of its past, present, and future."[21] Since the term "atemporal" seems to be the most neutral and yet encompassing, it has been used to designate the living present in this writing. It states a position between eternity and time. Atemporality avoids the metaphysical prejudgments concerning fixity and the ontological assumptions concerning time. Thus the relationship between the experience of permanence and flux, or the passive and the active, can best be designated as a transition between them. It could best be seen as permanence in transition.

Permanence in transition is indeed more appropriate for the constitution of the ground of self and ego relationship. It offers an access to the sense of otherness. All the theoretical constructs of apperception, associative pairing, appresentation, and empathy assume an a priori sense of alterity. Thus the origin of the experience of the sense of the other is already given in the atemporal activity of the self. This can be maintained not only on phenomenological but also on logical grounds. Since the self is anonymous to itself and its apodictic evidence of itself, it cannot then claim to be more certain of itself than of the sense of another. If the self is an anonymous life, then it cannot have the slightest power of disposal over itself. In this context, it is difficult to say which activities are of the self and which belong to an ego as distancing from the self, as the sense of otherness.

Thus, even at the anonymous level there *emerges a first connection between a self and an alter ego*. This emergence is necessitated by the slippage, the stance in transition. The reflective recouping of the self in that transition is a direct recognition of itself as other and self. Originary self-constitution of a streaming awareness of the anonymous self is coequal with "other constitution." Thus the "other functioning" is at this level of anonymity not yet distinguishable from self-functioning. The only difference is the sense of self and other and the first- and second-person designation.[22] These are, of course, dependent on linguistic traditions.

Once again, then, if all temporal attributes are inappropriate in any attempt to describe the absolute flow, then it cannot be said of it, as it can of an enduring tone, for example, that its phases proceed in a succession. Nor can it be said that, if they are not consecutive, then these phases must be simultaneous; the absolute flow is the ground of both simultaneity and succession. It would not even be accurate to say that a certain phase of the flow is actually present and other phases past because this would be to regard time-constituting phenomena as objectivities constituted in time. The only option for Husserl is to claim that the flow is absolute transcendental subjectivity that either scatters itself among the numerous acts, named as egos, or maintains its permanence in transition.

POSTSCRIPT

Augustine explored the problematic of self-identity and continuity of the soul by posing the question of the ontological status of the being of time as a nihilating threat, and he discovered that the presence of time in the soul is not identical with the soul's time awareness on the grounds of traditional

ontology of Being. Husserl thought that he could access time awareness and self-identity by excluding the question of Being and could then find that the self can become identified with some ego and thus become disrupted and scattered without self-identity, disclosing the way that the self is the source and continuity of any ego as a transition to otherness and self-identification with the otherness. The difference between Augustine and Husserl is this: Augustine took one aspect of Plato's ultimate *gene*, permanence, and attributed it to Being, while leaving change, in the form of time, as a problem of nonbeing; Husserl, meanwhile, excluded the question of Being, accepted Plato's permanence/change, and hence never entered the ontological threat of time as a possibility of nonbeing. Yet both have demonstrated that the continuity and self-identity of the self is not that easily dismissed as the current rage of postmodernism and even deconstruction would want to claim.

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A Time to Be Born, a Time to Die

Saint Augustine's Confessions *and Paul Ricoeur's* Time and Narrative

Andreea Deciu Ritivoi

Paul Ricoeur's most sustained engagement with St. Augustine's *Confessions* appears in the opening chapters of his magisterial three-volume study of narrative, *Time and Narrative*. Published in the mid-1980s, this work consecrated Ricoeur as one of the most important thinkers of the twentieth century. Recognition came first in the United States (where he had already immigrated), but the book was also well received in France. It consists of an original, eclectic mélange of theories and approaches that brings together classical and medieval philosophy with German metaphysics, and French historiography with Anglo-Saxon logic. The key idea proposed in *Time and Narrative* is that mimetic representation is not limited to the depiction of reality in stories but also includes two additional levels: the level of prefiguration, where our perception of reality fosters particular storytelling techniques, and the reception of narratives, which comes to create a universe in itself that in turn shapes our understanding of reality as well as of other stories.[1] This conception is known as the threefold mimesis, and it represents one of Ricoeur's most innovative contributions to narrative theory. Time plays a critical role in this theory, and Augustine is the main source of inspiration for Ricoeur's reflections on time.

The very title *Time and Narrative* makes recourse to Augustine seem justified, perhaps even predictable, given the enduring fame of the Augustinian reflections on time. However, Ricoeur's own conception of time was influenced more decisively by another philosopher, Martin Heidegger. Was Ricoeur, then, using Augustine somewhat as a foil? The affirmative answer I offer to this question is not intended to diminish the significance of Augustine's theory of time for Ricoeur's philosophy. Rather, I want to

trace the way in which a close engagement with Augustinian thought—read by Ricoeur in minute detail—takes us beyond Augustine and leads to a perspective on time that not only offers the key to an understanding of one of the most important concepts thematized in Ricoeur's philosophical work, mimesis, but also is ultimately important for the conception of language that it shapes.

I begin this essay by situating the theory of time inspired by Augustine and developed by Ricoeur in *Time and Narrative* in the larger context of the latter's attempts to incorporate time into narrative theory. I offer a reconstruction of Ricoeur's analysis of Augustine as it appears in chapter 1 of volume 1 of *Time and Narrative* and is later revisited in chapter 1 of the third volume. Next, I look at the way in which Ricoeur reads Augustine against Aristotle's *Poetics* and how this hermeneutic strategy led him to important insights that became the foundation of his model of mimesis, a model that moves beyond the idea of the verisimilitude of a narrative text and the realm of reference and into incorporating the broad repertoire of actions and actors that are intelligible to a particular audience at a given time, as well as the ways in which stories can challenge and enrich this repertoire. Finally, I conclude that a theory of narrative that incorporates a phenomenology of time, as Ricoeur's does, instead of reducing it to logical sequences of events, allows us to understand the cognitive and moral dimensions of narrative far beyond what other models allow.

Time and Language

Time and Narrative is, arguably, Ricoeur's most complex and important work, in its implications for communication and language theory. While volume 1 sets the theoretical foundation by drawing on the issue of historical representation through narratives, volume 2 explores semiotic theories of narrative, from Vladimir Propp to A. J. Greimas and Claude Bremond, and then applies them to analyses of canonical texts in modernist literature, such as Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain*, and Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*. Finally, volume 3 discusses the connections between linguistic representation and lived experience, proposing a theory of mimesis that stresses the transformative power of language. Despite the focus on literature and historiography, *Time and Narrative* is not the work of a literary theorist or a philosopher of history. Rather, Ricoeur's interest in literary works (especially modernist) and historical accounts—both narrative enterprises—should be seen as an effort to foreground time

in the study of stories against a conceptual vocabulary and research methodology that has backgrounded (or completely obscured) it.

The attention to the temporal factor in Ricoeur's study of narrative must be understood in the broader context in which it occurs: a critique of structuralism. Throughout the work he produced in the 1970s and 1980s, Ricoeur tried to integrate a philosophy of language into hermeneutics, thus seeking a departure from a structuralist doctrine at pains to purge subjectivity from the study of language. The attempt was bold enough, and its success far from guaranteed. As François Dosse notes, "hermeneutics was criticized . . . as running counter to the critical and epistemological concerns of the period . . . presented as an antiscience, a kind of phrenology of symbols."[2]

Ricoeur's relationship with the structuralist camp had become particularly tense after the 1963 publication of his article on Claude Lévi-Strauss in the journal *Esprit*. Ricoeur countered Lévi-Strauss' general theory of relationship as the basis of understanding language and proposed instead that we view interpretation as the foundation of linguistic activity. The main point of disagreement between Ricoeur and the supporters of structuralism concerns Ferdinand de Saussure's distinction between language and speech—a differentiation that lies at the center of the structuralist enterprise. While Saussure argued that speaking (*parole*) is only an ephemeral and imperfect reflection of the abstract and more systematic level constituted by language (*langue*), Ricoeur asserts the transcendence of language. For him, language is defined, first and foremost, by "the intention to say something about something,"[3] to convey meaning. Like Émile Benveniste, Ricoeur sees language as inseparable from discourse, emphasizing that usage is what gives it substance, thus allowing words to have meaning.

As a philosophy of language, structuralism was necessarily set up to ignore time, because it emphasizes permanence and promotes ahistorical abstractions. According to Ricoeur, despite the fact that structuralism, via Saussure, distinguishes between a synchronic and a diachronic dimension of language—the first dealing with present instantiations of language, the second with its historical development—the actual study of structuralism privileges the synchronic as "the priority of the state of a language over its history."[4] As Paul Hopper argues, "structuralism totalizes and de-totalizes discourse by viewing texts retrospectively in terms of hierarchical components."[5] For Hopper, to restore to language "its crucial temporality" amounts to a "return to orality" as object of study as well as presumed default setting of linguistic structures.[6]

As a method of analysis, structuralism renders time invisible even when applied to the study of stories, the one place where time is most prevalent, or where "time becomes human," as Ricoeur puts it. Narratology, which flourished in the 1960s as an effort to ground the study of narrative in scientific principles, makes no conceptual room for temporality. As Thomas Pavel reminds us, one of the most famous approaches in narratology, Greimas' "narrative model, boldly aims at grasping the atemporal essence of narrative meaning."[7] By reducing narrative to surface-level structural connections between events and *actants* (the term launched by French narratology), narratology deliberately avoids an in-depth look at the broader temporal context in which an event would occur or in which a character would act. Pavel credits Peter Brooks—foremost among others and also a significant source of influence for Ricoeur, as credited in *Time and Narrative*—with the reinsertion of temporality into the study of narrative in the form of establishing a connection between the time-bound "forward thrust of stories" and the "drive of the unconscious."[8] More specifically, for Brooks storytelling is a strategy for coping with the temporal condition of existence, with our finitude and mortality. We read for the plot, according to Brooks, and, in following a story to its end, we remind ourselves that our own lives will end. Narrative becomes a way of rehearsing the ultimate experience, death. As one Ricoeur critic puts it, "Storytelling is the ultimate safeguard against the threat of death and eternity,"[9] which both reflect time without extension.

But one does not have to go back to the heyday of structuralism to register complaints about the lack of attention to temporality and the linguistic and philosophical reasons behind such an omission. Time is not a commonly investigated problem in contemporary rhetorical and communication theory—exceptions are a less-known essay by Chaïm Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca on temporality and the study of argumentation and, more recently, essays by Calvin L. Troup and Bryan C. Short. The reason for such an omission might be that we tend to take for granted the temporal nature of rhetorical acts as contingency based, so much so that we do not bother to reflect on it. Similarly, in 2003, J. Hillis Miller pointed out that time has long remained insufficiently theorized in literary theory, precisely because the intellectual traditions from which the term is inherited tend to render it an abstraction that "escapes direct representation."[10] For Miller, Ricoeur's discussion of time in *Time and Narrative* constitutes a "logical investigation," one that focuses "primarily on thematic representations of temporal experience in literature, taking the language of these representations more or less at face value."[11] By contrast, Paul de Man illustrates, for Miller, rhetorical

investigations that "tend to concern themselves with the means whereby figurative language of certain extreme and problematic sorts is used in literature to represent that unknowable thing, human temporality."[12]

Indeed, in *Time and Narrative* Ricoeur is not concerned with how figurative language represents temporality. But Miller is mistaken in depicting him as taking the language of temporal representation at face value. On the contrary, his analysis of Augustine is deeply embedded in reflections on language use, on common verbal expression that captures our everyday experience of time.

Always sensitive to the *style* of philosophical discourse, Ricoeur was uniquely drawn to the rhetoric of argumentation in Augustine's reflections on time. He comments repeatedly on the Augustinian rhetoric, each time emphasizing the aporetic nature of his reflections in a way that suggests, more than mere analytical observation, a (theoretically salient) fascination with the insolvability of the dilemma in question. Ricoeur was interested in the rhetorical features of Augustine's meditation on time (making frequent reference to the aporia at its center) precisely because his own approach to temporality is fundamentally a rhetorical one, concerned not so much with offering a definition of temporality as with coming to an understanding of how time becomes incorporated in language and communication.

Throughout *Time and Narrative*, Ricoeur posits a dialectical relationship between language and the world. As he later explained, his concern in this book is to argue that, "given that the sign is not the thing, that the sign is in retreat in relation to it, language is constituted marginally, in a sense, in relation to experience and becomes for itself a spoken universe."[13] The main goal of Ricoeur's philosophy of language is to escape the methodological dualism of structuralism: "to *think* language should be to think the unity of that very reality which Saussure has disjoined, the unity of language and speech."[14]

The question then becomes, how do Augustine's reflections on time support Ricoeur's anti- (or post-) structuralist agenda?

One answer is offered by the reception of the first volume of *Time and Narrative* upon its publication in the United States. According to philosopher of history David Carr's lengthy critique, the book "reviews, assesses, and finally contributes to the debate over whether history is properly regarded as a matter of telling stories about the past."[15] But to write about history requires a sustained engagement with time. Indeed, history and time are often used synonymously. At the time Ricoeur published *Time and Narrative*, in the mid-1980s, historiography was in a methodological crisis,

pulled between opposite approaches. One approach, which later came to be primarily associated with Hayden White's work, capitalized on its narrative dimension and thus insisted on its close resemblance to literary works, but it paid little attention to the representation of time in historiographic writing. By contrast, there was also an emerging cluster of research methods that rejected the narrative dimension of historiographic accounts, citing this as a necessary break for a field aspiring to scientific status. Ironically, both of these approaches, in vogue in historiographic research at the time, strove to eliminate time completely from historical representation. One did so by adopting a philosophy of history broadly based on nomothetic (law-generating) models, while the other, represented by the French Annales school and its main champion, Fernard Braudel, did so by emphasizing economic forces (trade exchanges, money, the emergence of particular guilds and trade associations) rather than events (famous battles, conquests, and invasions, etc.) and characters (kings and army generals).

In volume 1 of *Time and Narrative*, Ricoeur offers an extensive critique of both these approaches. He devotes considerable effort to countering Carl Hempel's nomothetic, covering-law account—which sought to explain historical occurrences through recourse to immutable, logical principles—as well as the historiographic method launched by the Annales school—which discarded the very notion of a historical "event" and replaced it with the so-called *longue duree* (long duration), extended stretches of time that could cover several centuries and for which chronology was no longer important. Both the nomothetic approaches and the Annales school eliminated the traditional historical categories of character, event, and sequence. By seeking to reinstate these categories, Ricoeur is not so much falling back on a traditional approach to historiography as trying to offer a strategic one that allowed him to define history in narrative terms, while also redefining narrative itself. As Carr explains, Ricoeur's conception of narrative centers on the notion of plot, "seen as a response to the paradoxes of experienced time."[16] In so doing, Ricoeur offers a "poetic response" to the Augustinian paradoxes of time.[17] It is a response drawn from the dialogue between the Augustinian *Confessions* and Aristotle's *Poetics* and centered on a concept of representation that brings together the world of lived experience, linguistic expression, and the impact of language on experience—how what we can say ends up shaping what we experience. This is his conception of mimesis as a simultaneous set of three operations: prefiguration, configuration, and refiguration. It is a conception solidly anchored in time, at all three levels.

In the next section, I revise the main articulations of the Augustinian view of time, as they became key components in Ricoeur's theory of mimesis. I address the following question: *How* is Ricoeur's conception of mimesis a response to the atemporality of the structuralist approach? I offer a two-pronged answer: by departing from the structuralist-narratological depiction of time as logical sequences of events, via a notion of mimetic representation that situates time, *apud* Augustine, in the domain of language, as well as, *apud* Heidegger, in the realm of experience.

Augustine's Time in Ricoeur's Reading

Ricoeur's reading of book 11 of the *Confessions* is summarized by Calvin L. Troup in the introduction to this volume: at stake in this reading is the paradox expressed by Augustine in his "cry . . . on the threshold of his meditation":[18] "What, then, is time? I know well enough what it is, provided that nobody asks me; but if I am asked what it is and try to explain, I am baffled."[19] A familiar experience defamiliarized once it has been made the topic of reflection through language—this is the root of Ricoeur's interest in time.

The familiar feel of temporality is a consequence of the fact that it defines lived experience, while its mysteriousness is a consequence of the fact that it also transcends lived experience (in eternity). Ricoeur differentiates time from eternity at the beginning of his inquiry by pointing out that "time becomes *human* time in a narrative."[20] Although primarily interested in human time (by virtue of being concerned with narrative), rather than eternity, and interested in the paradoxes created by our need to measure time, Ricoeur chooses Augustine as the starting point of his inquiry precisely because of this underside of temporality, one that is postponed in his analysis but never totally bracketed: time that cannot be measured, eternity. As he explains, a "meditation on eternity" is designed to provide an "intensification of the experience of time."[21] Nevertheless, Ricoeur's analysis of Augustine's thesis begins by occluding the component of eternity—an "artifice," he admits, intended to emphasize the aporetical nature of the Augustinian meditation on time.

Likewise, by reading Augustine in conjunction with Aristotle's theory of narrative—a very different text from Augustine's, both culturally and philosophically—Ricoeur hopes to emphasize that the key dimension of experienced, human time is discordance. When time is not taken into account in the study of narratives—as is the case in Aristotle's *Poetics*—we are left with a

conceptual system that stresses coherence and concordance. Where time is factored in and becomes the focus of attention—as for Augustine—we are left with a constant yearning for concordance stemming out of a sense of being overwhelmed by the threat of dispersal. Thus, for Ricoeur,

> each [of these two approaches] engenders the inverted image of the other. The Augustinian analysis gives a representation of time in which discordance never ceases to belie the desire for that concordance that forms the very essence of the *animus*. The Aristotelian analysis, on the other hand, establishes the dominance of concordance in the configuration of the plot. It is this inverse relationship between concordance and discordance that seemed to me to constitute the major interest of a confrontation between the *Confessions* and the *Poetics*.[22]

The focus on discordance in Augustine's discussion of time comes from the constant probing of the three components of time—past, present, and future—and their elusiveness and indeed recalcitrance to anyone who wishes to define time through recourse to them. In Ricoeur's words, "How can time exist, if the past is no longer, if the future is not yet, and the present is not always?"[23] How can time be measured, if its constant elusiveness defies measurement?

In volume 3 of *Time and Narrative*, Ricoeur connects Aristotle to "an entire cosmological tradition, according to which time surrounds us, envelops us, and dominates us, without the soul having the power to produce it."[24] As William Dowling has explained, to think of time in Aristotelian terms equates to a radical separation of time from human life: "if humans were subtracted from the world, the heavenly bodies would continue to travel their celestial round."[25] Aristotle approaches the problem of temporality by reducing it to a question of space: the distance between celestial bodies. Time, for him, represents how long it takes these celestial bodies to move.

By contrast, for Augustine, temporality presents a problem because it is approached by a human being struggling to understand it and to understand its paradox: time as an entity we measure and yet also one so ineffable that to measure it seems impossible. The famous Augustinian solution to this paradox is to shift the discussion away from time and onto the subject who perceives it. Time, then, is measured not as an autonomous entity but rather as the "stretching" of a soul (distentio animi) in the process of remembering, perceiving, and expecting—these three mental operations corresponding to the past, the present, and the future. The solution is carefully introduced by

Augustine and in minute detail reconstructed by Ricoeur. Various scholars have offered meticulous presentations of the original Augustinian reflection (e.g., Wills, Prager, Clark, Soderling), as well as of the Ricoeurian reconstruction (e.g., Kearny, Prager). I rely on their insights as I focus here on only the key elements on which this reconstruction rests. First, Augustine moves away from anchoring time as a series of moments in the past, the present, and the future and rather discusses time as "qualities" that can be past, present, or future. As Ricoeur explains, this shift allows us to "consider as existing, not the past and the future as such, but the temporal qualities that can exist in the present, without the things of which we speak, when we recount them or predict them, still existing or already existing."[26]

Second, by focusing on temporal qualities that can exist in the present, even as they are of things past and yet to come, Augustine can make the past and the future part of the present. In Ricoeur's terms, "By entrusting to memory the fate of things past and to expectation that of things to come, we can include memory and expectation in an extended and dialectical present which itself is none of the terms rejected previously: neither the past, nor the future, nor the point like present, nor even the passing of the present."[27] And finally, this move also allows Augustine to talk no longer about time per se as about psychological faculties that make the experience of time possible. Ricoeur sees the significance of this transformation in the following quotation from Augustine: "the present of past things is the memory; the present of present things is direct perception; and the present of future things is expectation."[28] Thus, time becomes the activity of a mind engaged in recollecting, perceiving, and expecting. "It is in my own mind, then, that I measure things."[29]

I use the term "activity" as intense engagement in a particular task, because, as Ricoeur points out, the defining aspect of the distentio animi is that it refers to a mind at work, one that "acts, that is, expects, attends, and remembers."[30] Distention is, according to Ricoeur, "nothing other than the shift in the noncoincidence of the three modalities of action."[31] But it is a shift operated by someone, an individual actively engaged in trying to understand his or her own experience. The shift pulls apart and parcels out an experience that is otherwise continuous and available to the subject all at once. For this reason, as Richard Kearny notices, Ricoeur tends to translate distentio animi in dramatic terms, as a "tearing apart" or "bursting asunder."[32] This centrifugal force of the soul's distention is kept in balance by a centripetal force, intention: the ability to concentrate on and pay attention to a particular perception, a recollection, or an expectation. Distentio marks

the domain of discordance, while *intentio* that of concordance. Because it is located in the mind, *intentio* can no longer be associated with the "now" of a particular perception or with the point-like present on which the mind can zoom in. Instead, *intentio* is a tripartite now, equally associable with the past and the future. Ricoeur writes:

> It is easy to rewrite each of the three temporal structures of action in terms of this three-fold present. The present of the future? *Henceforth*, that is, from now on, I commit myself to doing this *tomorrow*. . . . The present of the past? *Now* I intend to do that because I *just* realized that. . . . The present of the present? *Now* I am doing it, because *now* I can do it. The actual present of doing something bears witness to the potential present of the capacity to do something and is constituted as the present of the present.[33]

What Ricoeur discovered in reading Augustine was not a straightforward answer to the question that launched the inquiry (What is time?) but an account of how time is embedded in a subjective experience. He did not find a definition (time is . . .) as much as an explanation of how time is part of lived experience. Thus, a shift occurs in Ricoeur's reading, from a phenomenology of time—ultimately unavailable per se in Augustine—to a psychological account. Language plays a key role in this shift, insofar as Augustine's wrestling with the experience of time works its way through pondering common linguistic usage about time. For Augustine, the quintessential illustration of how the mind can "stretch" itself to cover past, present, and future comes in the case of the recitation of a psalm and, again, involves a deep engagement with language. In speaking the words of a psalm, the mind can at the same time be aware of the words already uttered, pay attention to the ones it is in the process of uttering, and anticipate the ones to come. Augustine explains:

> Suppose I am to recite a psalm which I know. Before I begin, my expectation is directed towards the whole. But when I have begun, the verses from it which I take into the past become the object of my memory. The life of this act of mine is stretched two ways, into my memory because of the words I have already said and into my expectation because of those which I am about to say. But my attention is on what is present: by that the future is transferred to become the past. As the action advances further and further, the shorter the expectation and the longer the memory, until all expectation is consumed, the entire action is finished, and it has passed into the memory. What occurs in the psalm as a whole occurs in its particular pieces and its individual syllables. The same is true of a longer

action in which perhaps the psalm is a part. It is also valid of the entire life of an individual person, where all actions are parts of a whole, and of the total history of the "sons of men."[34]

For Augustine, lived time unfolds in language, in speech even (the recitation of a psalm). His emphasis on the "whole" that is present in particular pieces—be they the recited words and syllables of a psalm or events and episodes in a person's life, or rather life*story*—also reveals a concern with a way of experiencing time that is structured and orderly, that brings together and forms patterns, rather than flowing randomly. It is this concern with the whole that leads to Ricoeur's definition of emplotment. Ricoeur matches the experience of time with the ability to follow a plot, similar to the stretching of a mind, in Augustine's terms, throughout the recitation of a psalm. When we follow a plot, as when reciting a psalm, we keep track of the events recounted as we anticipate their future developments and consequences. In its most basic depiction, this is what a plot is. But in supporting such a progression from past events to future ones via something perceived as unfolding right now, a story does not merely offer a logical sequence of events but relies for this sequence to be perceived as logical on the reader's general orientation to the world and to the events that take place in it. To ground the distinction between time as chronology (ordered sequence of events) and time as a product of experiencing the way of the world, Ricoeur introduces his tripartite notion of mimesis.

Time and Threefold Mimesis

Ricoeur's discussion of narrative represents another illustration of how the distentio animi unfolds. If narrative is a series of events ordered in meaningful sequences marked by a beginning, middle, and end, then to follow a narrative requires the ability to remember the beginning as one anticipates the end. As Ricoeur puts it later, the function of a narrative plot is to mediate between the manifold of events and the temporal unity of the story recounted, between the disparate components of the action—intentions, causes, and chance occurrences—and the sequence of the story."[35] The plot creates coherence where there may be nothing but chaos and arbitrariness, turning seemingly meaningless, unconnected developments into important units of signification.

That human time is measurable is especially important for conceptualizing emplotment, since to create a sequence of events requires a chronological perspective that can align one event *before* or *after* others. Augustine's

struggle, then, is at heart a narrative concern, comparable to Aristotle's (though so radically different in conclusion). Ricoeur is intrigued by Aristotle's dismissal of temporality as a strategy to see order and sequence (of events) as a logical (rather than purely chronological) problem. In Ricoeur's words, "In his [Aristotle's] *Poetics*, the 'logic' of emplotment discourages any consideration of time, even when it implies concepts such as beginning, middle, and end, or when it becomes involved in a discourse about the magnitude or the length of the plot."[36] While the plot of a story can unfold for the duration of a character's lifetime, a year, or even one day, an Aristotelian conception of emplotment leaves out the aspect of duration and treats all stretches of time—no matter how long or short—the same way, by reducing them to chronological sequences of events logically following one another.

Ricoeur focused on bridging the "cultural abyss that separates the Augustinian analysis of time in the *Confessions* and the Aristotelian analysis of plot in the *Poetics*,"[37] to develop an understanding of the processes involved in shaping our perception of the world and of the stories we tell and hear about this world. These are the processes that define mimetic activity, and, for him, they position the narrative between what he calls "the prefiguration of the practical field and its refiguration through the reception of the work."[38] To follow a story, according to Ricoeur, requires a practical understanding of an entire conceptual network of actions, goals, motives, intentions, and agents. Without such a practical understanding of what "help, hostility, cooperation, conflict, success, failure, etc."[39] mean, one cannot follow a story. This level constitutes *mimesis1*. For example, to know that a married woman cannot engage in a romantic relationship with another man is what affords readers a practical understanding that is crucial to an entire literary tradition of stories of adultery and betrayal. At the same time, the stories that compose one's cultural repertoire shape and reshape this conceptual network: failure and success get redefined by stories of unlikely winners or losers, hostility can acquire a new meaning in a just war or an invasion narrative, and an adulteress can become a tragic heroine. The ability of stories, once they have been received and understood by an audience, to refigure the practical field constitutes Ricoeur's *mimesis3*. In between the two levels lies the text and its own mimetic dimension as the linguistic representation of particular actions, agents, and events. The plot per se functions at the level of *mimesis2*, and it is "only in the plot that action has a contour, a limit . . . and a magnitude."[40] It is at the level of *mimesis2* that we perceive certain events as preceding or following others: an unhappy marriage preceding adultery or a breakup following betrayal.

In Ricoeur's words, "What counts here [in his theory of mimesis] is the way in which every day praxis orders the present of the future, the present of the past, and the present of the present in terms of one another."[41] But how does our experience of time make such ordering possible in the stories that compose our cultural repertoires? Ricoeur complains that "Aristotle shows no interest in the construction of a time capable of being implicated in the constructing of the plot."[42] The Augustinian answer to this question also leaves him dissatisfied because, according to Ricoeur, there is "no pure phenomenology of time in Augustine."[43] Ricoeur sees Augustine's view of time as essentially a "psychological thesis" and a rhetorical tour de force.[44] Ricoeur remains troubled by the lack of a properly phenomenological dimension, and his turn to Heidegger reveals his insistence on the need for a phenomenological theory of time: "the properly phenomenological originality of the Heideggerian analysis of time—an originality due entirely to its anchorage in an ontology of Care—consists in a hierarchization of the levels of temporality or rather of temporalization."[45]

Following Heidegger, Ricoeur distinguishes between a time that is strictly mechanical and impersonal—the time displayed on a clock or entered in a log—and a time predicated on a keen awareness of the world and the others in it. It is this second form of temporality—for which he uses the Heideggerian term "within-time-ness"—that plays out in storytelling and that also structures the way we conceive of the social order. Following Heidegger, Ricoeur argues that our experience of time is determined by our preoccupation with particular needs, obligations, desires, hopes, or ambitions: "It is because there is a *time to do* this, a right time and a wrong time that we can reckon *with* time. . . . [A] day is not an abstract measure; it is a magnitude which corresponds to our concern and to the world into which we are thrown. The time it measures is that in which it is *time* to do something (Zeit zu), where 'now' means 'now that'; it is the time of labors and days."[46]

By way of making these abstract notions more palpable, consider, for instance, Joan Didion's recounting in *The Year of Magical Thinking* of her husband's cardiac arrest: on a winter night, after the couple had just sat down to dinner and John Dunne, her husband, had finished his scotch, he collapsed and was never to recover. The suddenness of his death left Didion struggling with the somber realization befalling so many victims of tragic accidents: *life changes in an instant*. Yet the purpose of the narrative contained in the memoir is precisely to challenge this popular wisdom and to move the reader away from an understanding of temporality as a sequence of moments, which can be arbitrary and unexpected, to an understanding

of temporality as a meaningful framework of our existence. In the memoir, Didion forces herself to remember the events preceding and following the cardiac arrest with as much precision as possible, hoping to determine the exact moment when her husband's death had occurred. The moment of his demise can be marked impersonally on a medical record upon being pronounced dead in the hospital or at the time the paramedics ceased their attempts to resuscitate him (since after that he did not have a chance to recover).

Didion struggles to identify the exact time of his death, the "now" when she had lost him. But the act of narrating their life together, her husband's medical history, and the anxiety their daughter's illness caused both of them leads Didion to see the particular moment of his death more in connection to events that preceded it than as an arbitrary, tragic, unexpected blow. Her husband's death is no longer merely a cardiac arrest but the beginning of her widowhood. His time to die is her time to begin a new kind of life, marked by loneliness, grief, and anguish.

As Ricoeur puts it, "It is important, therefore, to see the difference in signification that distinguishes the 'now' proper to this time of preoccupation from 'now' in the sense of an abstract instant. The existential now is determined by the present of preoccupation, which is a 'making present,' inseparable from 'awaiting' and 'retaining.'"[47]

Ricoeur approaches emplotment from a phenomenological perspective that marks a significant departure from Aristotle's conception of plot, with its emphasis on concordant discordance established in the logical sequence of a before-now-after. Rather than just a moment in a series, for Ricoeur "now" is a phenomenological entity, embedded in an experiential understanding of what counts as urgent or timely, belated or premature. Such an understanding is shaped by the ability to place occurrences and actors within a framework that clearly marks a progression from one event to another and ultimately toward a narrative conclusion that is neither deduced nor fully predicted but is acceptable given what has come before. The death of Didion's husband, as recounted in *The Year of Magical Thinking*, is neither fully predicted by his history of heart problems or stress nor deduced once we start reading the episode of the couple's last dinner (the story would fall flat if the tragic ending were fully predictable or deducible). Yet it is acceptable once we have finished reading the story. It makes sense, but not so much in a chronological sequence of before-now-after as in a progression from a time of seemingly endless opportunities (in his youth) to a time of contentment and fulfillment (at the height of their success as writers and of their

happiness as a married couple) and finally to a time of sorrow and decay (marked by both his cardiac arrest and their daughter's illness). As Ricoeur puts it, in a story, "we are following . . . the destiny of a prefigured time [a time of aging, of illness, of death] that becomes a refigured time [a time of grieving for the survivors] through the mediation of a configured time [the recounted story of John Dunne and Joan Didion]."[48]

Scheherazade's Strategy: Coping with Time as Negativity

Ricoeur's recourse to the Aristotelian conception of emplotment—no matter how much he modifies it—would suggest that the fundamental concern of the Augustinian reflection on time, a *Christian* meditation on eternity, remains bracketed in Ricoeur's *Time and Narrative*. Although the problem of eternity is deferred to the end of the analysis, Ricoeur never loses sight of the fact that "Augustine's meditation is indivisibly concerned with eternity and time."[49] Tuned in to the rhetoric of the Augustinian text, he pays special attention to the genre and setting of the *Confessions*: an address to God, which is an appeal to an interlocutor who exists on a different ontological scale and yet is brought into relationship with the supplicant mind through an intimate rhetoric, reflected in the use of the second person. Time is the very consequence of this rhetorical act of beseeching God, as "it is in light of the infinite perfection of this divine Other, spoken to in the second person by a first person, that we sense our temporal existence."[50] But once experienced throughout a confrontation with the divine, temporality becomes negativity, a "lack or defect in being."[51] God is infinite; human beings are finite and transient. For us, time is aging, decay, and death; for God time is eternity.

Yet Ricoeur struggles to find a reconciliation, so that "the contrast between eternity and time . . . not [be] limited to surrounding our experience of time with negativity."[52] He proposed a way of articulating the contrast between eternity and time in terms of the dialectic of *intentio-distentio*. In stretching our mind to remember the past, perceive the present, and anticipate the future, we also live out our limited time on earth. But in concentrating on the moment—which, for Augustine, is the moment of addressing God—we evade temporality. While the distentio represents dispersal—time as decay and death, synonymous "with the wandering of the old Adam"—the intentio tends to be identified with the fusion of the inner man ("until . . . I am fused into one with you").[53] Once again, Kearny explains,

"in spite of the fact that we find ourselves 'torn asunder' in our creaturely existence, 'deprived of the stillness of the eternal present,' and laid waste by distractions (*distentio est vita mea*); we are still capable of seeking after the *intentio* of the inner self united with its Maker."[54] Intentio, thus defined, is hope evading the vicissitudes of time, what Ricoeur calls "the sorrow of the finite." As Kearny puts it, by "anchoring the dialectic of *distentio* and *intentio* in the larger dialectic of time and eternity, Augustine underscores the fact that it is in the very midst of our experience of temporal dispersal that our desire for some eschatological reconciliation emerges."[55]

For Augustine, the way we experience time in distentio animi is also a key way of taking charge of our own interiority and becoming aware of our place in the world. As Gary Wills notes,

> St. Augustine's problem was to turn time the enemy into time the friend. He does this by entry into the basic experience of memory, in which the I-now somehow recovers an I-then, by an act which is neither of the two I's taken simply. I can in effect resurrect a former self, not exactly as it was, but transcended: I-happy can recall a me-sad, without undergoing that sadness. . . . For him, the self recovered is always a self transcended. What matters to him is not objective fact detachable from him, but the miracle that allows him to stay in contact with himself, to perdure across the disjunct points of an instant "present" always disappearing. For just as the I that is recollected is also transcended, so is the I recollecting.[56]

As a framework for experiencing time in an ordered, meaningful way, narrative becomes a strategy for self-discovery, as well as a way of coping with the knowledge of one's inevitable ending, death.[57] In his posthumously published book, *Living Up to Death* (a collection of notes made in the last few months of his life), Ricoeur writes about dying "as an event: passing, ending, finishing. In one way, my dying tomorrow is on the same side as my being-already-dead tomorrow. On the side of the future perfect tense. . . . To think of myself as one of these dying people is to imagine myself as the dying person I shall be for those who attend my dying."[58] Up to the last moment and into one's "most terrifying" anticipation of the end, living requires the ability to position oneself, narratively, in relation to a past and a future and in relation to the other characters who inhabit our life stories.[59]

Conclusion

Time, for Ricoeur, represents "that structure of existence that reaches language in narrativity."[60] The main conceptual tenets of this understanding of time emerge from Ricoeur's reading of Augustine but are also influenced by Heidegger. Following Augustine, Ricoeur believes that our experience of time unfolds at the limit of negativity (eternity). In response to this phenomenon of negativity, Ricoeur argues that we experience time as preoccupation with the events and actions marked as significant by our cultural repertoire. Time, then, is reducible neither to mechanical measurement nor to logical sequences of before-now-after but reflects instead an ontological care, understood as a way of making sense of our experiences, knowing what counts as urgent, belated, timely, or untimely. Ricoeur's conception of time is the product of an original hermeneutic method that involves reading Augustine against two unlikely points of reference, Aristotle and Heidegger. This affords an understanding of time that recognizes the existence of a gap between the reflecting mind and the world of experience and that looks at language as the bridge. Ricoeur says it best: "because we are in the world and are affected by situations, we try to orient ourselves in them by means of understanding; we also have something to say, an experience to bring to language and to share."[61]

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Ellul and Augustine on Rhetoric and Philosophy of Communication

Calvin L. Troup and Clifford G. Christians

Jacques Ellul (1912–1994) is best known as an enemy of modernity. Throughout his work Ellul conducts a relentless critique of the discursive phenomenon of modernity he refers to as *la technique*. As he says in *The Technological Society*: "The term *Technique*, as I use it, does not mean machines, technology, or this or that procedure for attaining an end. In our technological society, technique is the totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency (for a given stage of development) in *every* field of activity. Its characteristics are new, the *technique of the present has no common measure with that of the past.*"[1]

He speaks of la technique as the pervasive "spirit of the age," more profound and more potent than any particular tool, machine, instrument, process, or structure. Technique is the discourse of modern reductionism that systematically produces and permeates culture and society with the credo: *if it can be done, it must be done.*[2] Technique manufactures techniques, incessantly replicating technological methods and products. Every important question can be answered by applying the proper techniques, following the proper procedures, and using the proper methods, all of which can be duplicated with ease. Consequently, la technique excludes content, substance, and meaning by substituting *image* for language; that is, for word.[3] Ellul distinguishes here between the spoken word and image, including text as images derived by techniques of print or writing.[4]

Less well known is Ellul's affinity for rhetoric and philosophy of communication. In *The Humiliation of the Word* he advocates rhetoric as the antidote to la technique:

> A person who has been trained in rhetoric, in the strict sense of the word, can no longer learn in any other way. His thinking necessarily takes place in the world of reasoning, dialectic, analysis, and synthesis. This is not without its dangers, of course: we are aware that words can be abused. We know how an illusion allows us to take these symbols for reality, and how empty talk sometimes fails to be attached to anything concrete. Sometimes confusion between rhetorical reasons and reason exists. But these abuses in no way affect the authenticity of the intellectual mechanism that is formed by and for the word.[5]

Ellul's primary project is critique; he admittedly devotes minimal time and attention to either theoretical or practical solutions, and he rarely uses the term "rhetoric" in his work.[6] While an outlier of sorts in the world of rhetoric and philosophy of communication, Ellul is not a total stranger to the field.[7] Scholars present him occasionally as a modern-day Luddite, sometimes as a bona fide prophet, and most frequently as an enigmatic critic of technological society.[8] His work provides unique perspectives on communication dynamics as they impact consciousness and culture, and he has been a catalyst for radical insights into totalitarian propaganda.[9] Ellul also offers entry points for scholars working at intersections of human communication, technology, and theology.[10]

Although Ellul devotes no treatise to rhetoric or philosophy of communication per se, his proximity to rhetoric, hermeneutics, and philosophy of communication has already been established.[11] And Ellul *does* call directly for a rhetorical mind-set to resist the mind-numbing advance of la technique. Just at a point where the power of la technique might lead to despair, Ellul commends the epistemic, ethical, and practical virtues of rhetoric as lending potency through which ordinary people might resist la technique. Rhetorical sensibilities can equip us to negotiate a hypermediated world with a modicum of true liberty, actuating a real hope that Ellul will not abandon. In a world where public discourse has long since departed from oratory for Technique-driven communication, Ellul presents an intriguing philosophical and theoretical case for rhetoric in medias res.[12]

Our purpose in this chapter is to consider Ellul's intellectual genealogy in association with Augustine, interpreting explicit textual coordinates that place Ellul within the realm of rhetoric and philosophy of communication. To accomplish this, we first establish the contours of Ellul's engagement with Augustine's ideas. Next, we consider basic resonances within philosophy of communication, including common commitments to vernacular language, the spoken word, and the incarnation as prototype. Finally, we

suggest a specific metarhetorical philosophy of communication—aletheiac rhetoric—through which the incarnation unites truth and love in rhetorical practices for incarnate human beings today.[13]

Ellul and Augustine

Saint Augustine, bishop of Hippo (354–430), whose work ranges across the breadth of the liberal arts from philosophy and rhetoric to theology, is a formative presence in the work of Ellul. Although best known as a social philosopher, not a theologian, Ellul takes biblical theology seriously. Fifteen of his books are explicitly religious in character, including biblical commentaries and works on the philosophy of religion.[14] His reliance on Augustine is direct. Ellul's doctoral thesis in 1936 begins with the following passage from Augustine:

> Such is the error of those who cannot accept that what was permitted to the just of ancient times is not permitted to the just of today and cannot accept that God has given a commandment to one and another commandment to another for temporal reasons. What is permissible now will cease to be so in an hour; what is permitted or commanded is expressly prohibited and punished here. Does this mean that justice is varied and changeable? No, but the times it governs change as they pass, because they are times.[15]

The reference indicates, he says, "that I already had a conception of the relativity of institutions and the relativity of their validity."[16] In Ellul's most important book, which he wrote later in his career (Éthique de la Liberté, translated as *Ethics of Freedom*, 1976), Augustine serves to advance Ellul's arguments on agape throughout the text.[17] Discussing the primacy of human liberty, Ellul refers to the "celebrated formula" and "famous dictum" of Augustine: "'Love (God) and do as you like.' Freedom thus finds both its orientation and its possibility in the love of God."[18]

Ellul distinguishes himself from Augustine in temper and tempus. In temper, *What I Believe* expresses Ellul's reluctance to disclose personal aspects of his Christian faith—whether devotion or deficiency—a conscious contrast to Augustine's *Confessions.*[19] And while a work like *Le Fondement Theologique du Droit* (*The Theological Foundation of Law*) might seem to challenge Augustine's legacy, Ellul suggests that associations between Augustine and natural law are complicated. The natural law tradition comes into modernity through Aquinas, who mentions Augustine as an authority but

finds his theological and philosophical grounds for natural law elsewhere. Thus Ellul warrants his argument against natural law, which focuses on the Reformation and positivist theories, through Augustine's orthodox skepticism about natural law in the *Confessions*.[20] Augustine invites such dialectical positions—he believes in natural law's existence but doubts any human ability to put it into practice. As Augustine says in *City of God*, every human judge faces intractable dilemmas of practical justice every day.[21]

In tempus, having learned the relativity of temporal institutions from Augustine, Ellul points to Augustine's historical moment in *The Political Illusion* and *The Presence of the Kingdom* and suggests that we live with more complex institutions and problems than Augustine.[22] Ideas of justice vary somewhat from the Han dynasty to the prophets of Israel to Aristotle to Augustine: "Still, there are points of similarity and even of identity. All the variations are at least commensurate with one another."[23] In sum, however, the noted distinctions honor Augustine's legacy and secure his role as one of Ellul's intellectual guides. Ellul attributes his high regard and identification with Augustine not to the person but to "this unpredictable act of the Spirit of God who blows where he wills (John 3:8) and lays hold of whom he wills . . . who calls Paul when he is a persecutor and Augustine in his rhetorical pursuits and makes all truth known to both of them."[24]

Ellul points to the Apostle Paul and Augustine as exemplary because both, after their conversions, dedicated years to Christian meditation before launching into ministry in pagan environments.[25] Ellul, like Augustine, wants nothing to do with theological details and quarrels.[26] Instead, working from basic starting points, he names Augustine as a theologian worth engaging because his work includes "so many correct and true thoughts covering so many errors and deviations."[27] Not only does he hear Augustine as a model witness in word to the world but he also further credits Augustine with putting theology to work faithfully in the world, a quality to which Ellul aspires: "She [the church] should bring about the event instead of trailing it, submitting to it, or trying to explain it. Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Luther, for example, are men who brought about the event, and that is what the Church has been like whenever she has been faithful."[28]

Furthermore, Ellul tacitly invokes Augustine's formulations. A major section of *The Presence of the Kingdom* (1948) revolves around "the two cities" from Augustine's *City of God* with no specific reference to the book.[29] A summary of Ellul's early intellectual trajectory, the section cites only biblical passages. Later, he cites *City of God* directly in *The Technological Society*. There

he adopts the motif of the earthly city in conflict with the City of God to argue that Christianity resists, rather than promotes, the "technical intention" that leads to la technique.[30] Ellul challenges conventional wisdom in historical studies, using Augustine's premises and observations to refute assertions that Christianity, including the Reformation, contributed to or complied with Technique.[31]

In other books, Ellul resonates notably with Augustine. An early passage in *The Humiliation of the Word* echoes *Confessions* 11.27–28 on spoken language as analogous to the nature of meaning in time:

> A sentence has certain rhythm, and I must wait for the end of it to know what is being said to me. I must always wait in order to grasp the exact meaning of the sentence which has just begun. I am suspended between two points in time. The beginning of the sentence has already been pronounced, and has already faded away; the end has not yet been spoken, but it is coming, and it will give meaning to what was said at the beginning.[32]

We know that Ellul read *Confessions* a number of times; more remarkable is the continuing proximity at the base of Ellul's intellectual project.[33] In sum, as a professor of the history and sociology of institutions at the University of Bordeaux, Ellul is revealed as a continental thinker working consciously, we find, within a shadow cast by Augustine. Having sketched substantial linkages between Ellul and Augustine genealogically, we now turn to the contours of their work in rhetoric and philosophy of communication.

PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Ellul and Augustine meet, in theory and practice, among common people. Ellul calls himself a "layman" and insists that we should conduct our intellectual work in the presence of other lay people.[34] He observes the effects of changes in the role of language and hears the voices of common people concerned that the substance of language has been replaced with smoke and mirror images.[35] Augustine's brief "ivory tower" experience was short lived and, finally, unsatisfactory.[36] He invested his life in the ordinary town of Hippo and its North African byways, tuning himself to the lives and words of the people there.[37] When Ellul calls himself "no communication specialist" he does not mean "amateur"; he denies technical proficiencies. His intellectual commitments are broad in scope and deeply grounded. Similarly, Augustine refers readers to rhetoric handbooks rather than waste readers' time rehearsing techniques.[38] Augustine's reticence about rulebooks

and commendation of learning from good models of eloquence places him squarely within the "great school of humanist rhetoric": that is, the "school of civic rhetoric."[39]

Ellul aligns himself with the same school, within the "common sense" tradition of rhetoric.[40] In particular, he connects with Augustine's vernacular sensibilities, that is, speaking to the common person via commonplaces. Understood philosophically, he works on a phenomenological plane of rhetorical being, mediated interpersonally through the present spoken word.[41] He emphasizes the meaningful substance of ordinary language, a commitment shared with both Augustine and with Ellul's contemporary, Paul Ricoeur, who also harkens to the vernacular discursive practices of Jesus.[42]

We have heard the prima facie case for Ellul's intellectual attention to and respect for Augustine. But the interesting questions surround intellectual genealogy—an intergenerational resemblance that emerges in their respective patterns of thought. Like Augustine, Ellul converts to Christianity—a faith he receives with an already formed intellectual life. Beyond conversion, their reordered intellectual lives constitute a significant common benchmark. They neither reject nor renounce the life of the mind; rather, their Christian commitments compel them to prolific scholarship. And we note here that both work as public intellectuals owning their philosophical grounds in creedal Christian orthodoxy, built upon serious biblical study.[43] Based on their extensive biblical commentaries and theological work, we understand that Ellul and Augustine are deeply compatible—not identical but harmonious. Our project studies their texts in an effort to grasp their shared ideas on their terms.

We believe that one particularly important resemblance emerges in their intellectual genealogy: common ground within rhetoric and philosophy of communication. Giving initial attention to Ellul, we will consider three commonplaces where Ellul and Augustine stand together: (1) common sense and human society, (2) the primacy of the spoken word, and (3) the incarnation as paradigm for language and communication. We will develop these commonplaces in sequence, showing Ellul's engagement with each one and listening for resonances in Augustine's philosophy and rhetoric.

Common Sense

Since when, asks Ellul in *The Humiliation of the Word*, has it become radical to claim that the purpose of communication in language is to say something to someone?[44] He insists on beginning with assumptions that correspond

to everyone's experience: "always we must come back to simple facts, common sense, and commonplaces as our starting point."[45] Ellul explains the phenomenological function of common sense briefly:

> Common sense defies organized thought. Common sense escapes from any sort of integrating doctrine, and, after half a century of oppression, it springs up strangely unharmed and expresses itself in paradoxes. Common sense is not an inferior stage of thought: it is paradox standing up to structured, logical, organized thought, which follows the rules (of logic, dialectic, etc.). Paradox, always related to the word springing up as something new, prevents thought from closing up and reaching completion. Paradox prevents the system from accounting for everything, and does not allow a structure to mold everything.[46]

To work out Ellul's perspective, we listen first to his introduction of the neighbor in the *Presence of the Kingdom*. For Ellul, the ultimate problem of la technique as seen from his 1948 vantage point is the technologically induced isolation of people from one another. The movement to control a society by a rationalized discursive order distances people and disrupts the human basis of communication. The "mechanism of information increasingly destroys this common basis of communication," and the "technical channel breaks down personal relations."[47] The result is isolation: a deprivation that does profound violence to the human spirit. From Ellul's perspective, the Nazis and Communists of the early twentieth century were exceptional in degree and initiative, but not in kind.[48] Their orientation was indicative of a broader modern impulse propelled by la technique to separate people by applying science to language. Modern civilization "tends to the rupture of personal relations," leaving people in a state of "despairing solitude . . . rational sterility, and subjective emotionalism."[49]

Ellul places the onus on intellectuals directly to recognize and to act on the fact that "what matters is to know definitely whether he still has something to say to a man which man can understand."[50] And the person in question, Ellul's "man," turns out to be his neighbor "Mario."[51] Hopes for real resistance to the ravages of technical communication reside in the person of the neighbor. "We must refuse energetically to be detached from this sphere [the most basic human level], a level which is not very high, but is the only significant one. . . . It is in the concrete life of this man, which I can easily know, that I see the real repercussions of the machine, of the press, of political discourses, and of the administration."[52]

One dimension of common sense, then, can be found only at the level of one's neighbor, a person whom we can meet truly at a point of humble realism and relationship, and without whom human thought about human communication is virtually impossible. A second, related dimension to consider in reference to Ellul's phenomenology of common sense is human communion. Communion is concrete, personal, face-to-face conversation with one's neighbor possible only through words. However, according to Ellul, we lack immediate contact with even our closest neighbors. In human life, all thought and action, including all manner of human relations, community, and society, is mediated by language.[53] Even in our closest meetings, "the innermost being of one person has reached the innermost of another through the mediation and ambassadorship of this language go-between."[54] Immediate communication is an oxymoron; mediation is a defining empirical and ontological reality. Every human being lives in a milieu mediated by language. The original mediator is the word: "[Language] is—and is only—the means of making connection between one person and another."[55]

Ellul is well known for his critiques of the technologized images of modernity and the electronic media. What may be lost in this critique is his insistence that the problem is found entirely in the *false* mediation of la technique, which replaces the mediating role of language with the manufactured image. The word is "irreplaceable for establishing communication between us" and is "utterly indispensable."[56] Therefore, the original question remains, "what produces human communion?" Ellul's answer: only the word. Nothing associated with la technique—"no gadget"—can generate or maintain human communion.[57] He recognizes that he is forcing the issue, placing the philosophical and theoretical action squarely in the realm of interpersonal communication. For example, he understands that advocates of technological mediation will object, seeing face-to-face interpersonal communication as illusory.[58] But Ellul argues that, in interpersonal communication, language is the sole mediator. As such, language is too robust to support or sustain any real personal or social autonomy. A self-fashioned identity cannot coexist within interpersonal communion as described by Ellul.[59] *Presence of the Kingdom* echoes this basic commitment: "the problem of language is the key-problem to contact with other men."[60]

For a French intellectual to call for a philosophy of communication based on ordinary humans engaging in meaningful, face-to-face conversation might seem unremarkable (almost passé). But here in the early twenty-first century, we can more clearly see the relevance of Ellul's call: the totalizing domination of society by mechanized and digitized

communication does diminish face-to-face conversation involving physical presence, while modern ideological currents summarily discount the commonsense grounding that supports the superiority of speaking to one another in person.

Ellul's proposition is *radical*. His commitment to communion reveals the priority placed on the vernacular, spoken word in conversations of ordinary people, a commitment based on roots he holds in common with Augustine. In the framework of Christian thought, these shared roots focus theoretical and philosophical attention on interpersonal communion as mediated solely by words. As Augustine develops such ideas in broad strokes in which we can hear his philosophical expectations concerning temporality, eternity, and contingency, Ellul applies them in his own unique historical moment.

In his own moment, Augustine makes clear his assumption that human being is essentially social. We meet the infant Augustine in *Confessions* during a moment of frustration at being excluded from household conversation by a lack of language, only to enter the "stormy society of human life" more deeply with every linguistic advance.[61] The excursus into child development harmonizes with the broader perspective in *City of God*, through which the society of households and cities dominates—from the society of married couples, families, and friends to world empires. And society is not only present in the narrative background. Philosophical views on society are played out directly in book 19 as most desirable for human happiness and wisdom but also as a site of human misery. The ambivalence of the earthly city makes us wonder about the contours of eternity: Does human society continue in eternity at the end of time? Augustine says, "The [heavenly] city's life is inevitably a social one."[62] The ultimate form of human being—the life of rest, peace, and blessing—is eternally social.[63] The eternal city is not, however, limited to any aristocracy or other elite; the eternal society is a vernacular neighborhood that corresponds with the Scriptures—commonsense language that functions at many levels harmoniously and is "accessible to all."[64]

The pertinence of *communis sensus* in Augustine propels rhetoric in the earthly, intermingled city—where things are unsettled, uncertain, and contingent.[65] As Gerald Press notes, Augustine juxtaposes basic terms and tenets from Jerusalem and Athens (or Rome) in *On Christian Doctrine*, his best-known contribution to the history and theory of rhetoric and a founding text in both biblical and philosophical hermeneutics.[66] A cursory reading of *On Christian Doctrine*, book 2, clarifies the grounds for Augustine's common sense. The capacity for common sense is an intrinsic *function of language* rhetorically configured in society, which makes education a

hermeneutic project at its base. The common ground upon which common sense is temporally fashioned in *On Christian Doctrine* is common consent.[67] The authority and rationale for common sense come from both Scripture and the ancient traditions of philosophy and rhetoric. Augustine works in the wake of Isocrates, Cicero, and Quintilian, adhering to a form of common sense that insists on the integration of substance and style, form and content, wisdom and eloquence—a form emerging from a working synthesis of philosophy and rhetoric.

Augustine posits a symbiotic relationship between the given human capacity for language, common linguistic structures, and deliberative thought. These shared dynamics are manifested in particular languages, social institutions, and bodies of knowledge that belong to particular times, places, and peoples.[68] Augustine is a formative figure in the commonsense tradition at the transition between the late Roman Empire and the medieval world; he voices disdain, in *On Two Souls*, for those "divorced by some madness from the *communis sensus* of man."[69]

These discussions place Augustine and Ellul in close vicinity as intellectual companions on philosophy of communication. Despite the fact that Augustine walks a premodern path different from Ellul's in many regards, Ellul, when heard within an Augustinian genealogy, sounds less reactionary. First, Augustine confesses much through communion. Meaningful communion with family and friends, for good and for ill, dominates the text of the *Confessions*. And the *Confessions* triangulates conversation: Augustine addresses the reader in the presence of God; God's presence is public, not secret; a mystery, but not mysterious. The *Confessions* records his longing for communion in conversation and through language. After narrating the first nine books, he trains his full attention on questions of language and word in books 10–12. In the famous discourse of book 11 on time and eternity, Augustine is equally concerned with time and language. In a struggle to define "time," he grapples with problems of textual meaning against the basic comprehensibility in usage that we enjoy.[70] In later conversation, he conflates time and language but cannot ultimately resolve the problem definitionally.[71]

In *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine meditates on the priority and difficulty of language's role in communion, preferring clarity gained in "the vulgar manner of speech" to obscurities that result from "correct" grammar and diction: "What profits correctness in a speech which is not followed by the listeners when there is no reason for speaking if what is said is not understood by those on whose account we speak?"[72] He argues for the

priority to be placed on common understanding in interpersonal as well as public discourse.[73] Questions of language, mediation, and communion are major crosscurrents throughout Augustine's work. Augustine is a cultural critic of the late Roman Empire and can be understood to be concerned about the effects of the advanced technology of the empire, and *On Christian Doctrine* certainly addresses the expanding literacy of his day.[74]

Although there is no simple equivalence in Augustine's world to la technique, Augustine offers a powerful pre-iteration of the "language as singular mediator" doctrine later espoused by Ellul. The functional preeminence of language is explicit in *City of God*: "When men cannot communicate their thoughts to each other, they are completely unable to associate with one another despite the similarity of their natures; and this is simply because of the diversity of tongues. So true is this that a man would more readily hold a conversation with his dog than with another man who is a foreigner."[75] In *Confessions*, Augustine identifies himself and Moses as one such potential pair. Assuming Moses was present, "if he spoke in Hebrew, in vain would his voice strike upon my senses, and none of it would touch my mind. But if he spoke in Latin, I would know what he said."[76]

Ellul and Augustine align along principles that privilege human communion despite the realities of discord, dissonance, and misunderstanding in human life. As Ellul learned from Augustine, although their historical moments are distinct, dynamics from common rhetorical and theological sources ground Ellul's philosophy of language. For both men, the problem of language is *not* first the problem of text—although that is a problem of great dimensions. The first problem of language is the problem of interpersonal contact—face-to-face communion with another human being. Therefore, the spoken word becomes prominent as we trace their genealogy within philosophy of communication.

Spoken Word

Symbolization is a kind of basic human need that compels us to understand *why*.[77] Ellul links symbolization with milieu, noting that "the material modification of the environment is the consequence of its transformation into a system of signs and beyond that into a symbolic universe."[78] Only within the symbolic communication environment can we exercise symbolism. Ellul assumes that the symbolic world originates historically with oral dimensions of communication. In *The Humiliation of the Word*, Ellul chronicles and critiques the successful campaign of la technique to diminish the auditory

dimensions of human existence and elevate all things visual within the communication environment.[79]

J. Wesley Baker notes Ellul's argument that since the creation of symbols is rooted in historical milieu, problems arise during transition periods. While moving into the environment of la technique, our use of symbols has become outdated.[80] Ellul explains, "Since thinking is slow to move and verbal forms are always a step behind reality, the older environment serves as an ideological reference for those who have plunged into the new one."[81] This tendency toward anachronistic symbolization leads to "enormous errors of judgment" that result in a failure to identify properly the challenge of la technique.[82] Ellul believes that la technique now defines our study of human communication, symbolization, and discourse. Therefore, he employs prophetic tones to identify how la technique affects language and meaning today.[83]

Ellul, owning his unorthodox vantage point, takes issue with certain forms of both structural linguistics and poststructuralism, both of which he subsumes under the term "structuralism."[84] He refers directly to a number of prominent contemporaries working from grounds based in various semiotic theories as "structuralists," including Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, A. J. Griemas, Henry Miller, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Derrida.[85] Rather than seeing structuralism as a critical tool to resist la technique, Ellul argues that it is a branch of the broader study of semiotics, which also includes semantics, semiology, and semasiology, is an effect of la technique:[86] "The mentality of scientism has pounced upon language and has involved us in reducing the word to the state of an object."[87] Ellul responds to orthodoxies of structuralism with a keen sense of the dominant scholarly discourse. For instance, he warrants his response by association with Paul Ricoeur at pivotal points both philosophically and theologically.[88] Ellul's critique of structuralism can be summarized under three main headings: (1) structuralism denies meaning, (2) structuralism denies reality, and (3) structuralism denies knowledge.

Structuralism denies meaning. The modus operandi of la technique reduces everything to a single, visual model. By reducing language to a visual diagram, structuralism disconnects human language from being and meaning both existentially and ontologically.[89] Structuralism, reasons Ellul, is exclusively about text. Text—an image of words visualized in writing or print—is not human language but an anonymous trace of spoken words. By contrast, true language is spoken, personal, and ephemeral: "because they fly, spoken words are living and filled with meaning."[90] Ellul asserts that "we

all know that writing strips language of its certainty and even of its meaning."[91] Text alone is meaningless. Even so, if text is understood as an echo of language, meaning can be revived; text can be transformed into living language through speech. Ellul calls text a mummy that can be unwrapped and breathed back to life. A person can, in reciting a text, speak it back into present linguistic existence.[92]

Structuralism bypasses the chasm that separates speech and language from writing and text.[93] Structural linguistics applies scientific methods to words: "sketches, drawings, and diagrams . . . reducing language to countable units."[94] Reducing language to text via structural analysis is the *raison d'être* of la technique. Ellul says, "We think we have finally fathomed all of language when we can apply a semiotic diagram to it."[95] But structuralism neglects the depths of language and analyzes only the surface and function of text; in so doing, structuralism seems to negate the word. But the true word—the spoken word—had long since departed before the diagram was even sketched.[96] Text alone, dead from the start, is dissected on a semiotic table, while living language roams free.[97]

Therefore, structuralism provides insight into the nature of text but not into the nature of language. Seeing that text alone cannot be meaningful, the structuralist reduction necessarily turns exclusively toward "how a thing works. And this is in reality the preoccupation concerning language and communication."[98] Ellul remarks, "Without knowing it, structuralists [including poststructuralists] are possessed by the spirit of technique." They are infected with "machinitis" and fabricate a system in which "language, communication, and relationships all become machines."[99] Ironically, structuralism reduces language to an image-based model; the image, made by human artifice is speechless and blind. Consequently, the technique of structuralism denies significance, ideas, and reason. Textual autopsy necessarily finds language to be meaningless.

Structuralism denies reality. By contrast, Ellul declares human language to be essentially invisible and irreducible. Words leave no paper trail and cannot be envisioned; no image is vital language. He hears the death of the signified occurring at the foot of Mount Sinai while Moses receives the law. Aaron fashions a golden calf for the people. Together they look to a manufactured image—a text made with human hands—rather than listening to the invisible, uncreated, spoken Word of God.[100] Likewise, technique applies structuralism, a methodology that detaches the living word from the text yet claims a resemblance between text and speech. Ellul observes that the actual detachment severs humanity from real language, that is, from the

content, weight, and harmony of living words. Consequently, Ellul argues that the human word "explodes."[101] Separated from the reality of language, the signified disintegrates.

The endless play of signifiers results as a logical implication of the death of the signified. But the play cannot last long: "Scholars now realize that the signifier no longer has any value. We must liberate ourselves from the 'dictatorship of the signifier,' and therefore of structures, and counterbalance the signifier by giving all the weight to the utter uncertainty of 'flow.' "[102] Text pretends a resemblance to reality, suggesting equivalence between signifier and signified, but, ultimately, the critique of the signifier renders it "utterly empty" and disconnected.[103] Ellul notes, "It is not by chance that structuralism reduces language to a relationship of structures."[104] The relation between signifier and signified reflects the mutation from reality, which requires some sort of external relationship. The image, which is an entirely made thing, reduces significance to an exclusively internal relation.[105]

In the world of structuralism (i.e., poststructuralism), Ellul is suggesting that all of these relations and their detachment from any nonlinguistic reality are taken for granted. The death of the signifier with the signified is a common point of structuralist doctrine. There can be "no return to the signified: people assume that the elimination of the signified is over and done with and well done. Everyone agrees that nothing has meaning. The word does not say anything."[106]

Structuralism denies knowledge. Functionally, structuralism equates letters with spoken utterance as though both are human language. Having established the equation, poststructuralism goes to work on text and finds it meaningless. By implication, such semiotic analyses render spoken language incomprehensible and deny the existence of knowledge. When we abandon any definitive role for language, what remains is merely self-referential—groundless, insignificant, and uncertain.[107] Severing language from any independently existing reality, nothing can be said to exist in or through language either. Reducing language to structure closes reasoning, including all coherent thought and meaning, which leaves "nothing but the interplay of structures."[108] No source from which to create meaning remains.[109] Even expressions of incoherence and critiques of oppressive power seem vain, self-contradictory, and impossible.[110]

But the image is effective as a technique: a powerful, efficient engine of progress. Driven by structuralism and its philosophical commitment to image, rhetoric is reduced to a power function. When there is no answer to "what does it mean?" the only proper question becomes "how does it work?"

This is the foundational question of la technique. Ellul tells a story familiar to students of poststructuralist criticism: the reduction of language and its departure from reality denies the relation of language to being and meaning and limits significance "except to make action possible."[111] And what is the function of propaganda but to dispense with thought and compel action?[112]

In sum, Ellul embraces structuralism as a legitimate analysis of text but objects to its claims concerning the nature of meaning and language. Responding to problems in structuralism, he advances a philosophy of language that accounts for empirical linguistic phenomena that structuralism is powerless to address. He insists on the primordial nature of listening and speaking, aligning his philosophy of language squarely with the spoken word.[113] "For me, then, human spoken language cannot be reduced to any coherent collection of signs made understandable through the use of code."[114]

The philosophical and theoretical implications of language's origin as spoken word are immense, beginning with the phenomenological, existential, and empirical dimensions of orality.[115] Speech and listening resist the linguistic reductionism of la technique not because Ellul "says so" but merely because as a human he can say, "I side with the entire current of thought that makes spoken language the basis of human specificity . . . however subtle it may be, [the codified 'language' of ants and bees] has nothing in common with spoken human language."[116] The heart of human language resists structural analysis. Ambiguity and variation, flexibility in meaning—such things demonstrate dynamics unique to human speech. Ellul says that, as an existential, empirical reality, "the spoken word ushers us into another dimension: relationship with other living beings, with persons. The Word is the particularly human sound which differentiates us from everything else."[117] This personal resonance binds language to life, the commonplace human experience of listening and speaking. As a uniquely human sound, the spoken word can only be heard and is apprehended only through listening.[118] Language is not an idea or system or structure but a dialogue that "requires the mutual participation of the one speaking and the one listening, united in the same present moment."[119]

Resonance occurs exclusively in the present, which associates the spoken word with the breath of life itself, inseparable from the whole person and associated with the name of the person who speaks.[120] Spoken human language is utterly existential and entirely present. The Word once spoken belongs to the past. But this past has no reality, so the word cannot return. Silent waves spirit it away. It is not language any longer. Language is heard and believed *hic et nunc*, but, once spoken, it no longer exists.[121] We hear

in Ellul echoes of Augustine; here and now—the present—is all that exists. Augustine insists in *Confessions* that the past does not exist, the future does not exist, and the present has no extent.[122] "We glide along the stream of time," says Ellul, "without any spiritual framework, without a memory, without a judgment, carried about by 'all winds of doctrine' on the current of history, which is always slipping into a perpetual past."[123] The two share a Christian existentialist philosophy of language based on the essence of the spoken word.

What is human language and what are words, according to Augustine? His definitive answer is speech. In prologues to both *On Christian Doctrine* and *Confessions*, Augustine distinguishes carefully between learning language and learning letters. Language is a natural capacity—babies move out of infancy by acquiring speech, which they do as participant observers surrounded by other people who speak. Children learn to speak without lessons. Letters, however, must be taught.[124] Most human signs—real language—are words to be heard. But since real words dissipate immediately, letters are used to form written words, which are signs of spoken words. Therefore, a textual word is a sign of a vital sign—a spoken word.[125] All the time and attention Augustine devotes to hermeneutics is predicated by the primacy of speech. Precisely because a written word is *not* a spoken word, interpreting text is a unique challenge. The written word requires a distinct interpretive art.

The phenomenological constants of human language are listening and speaking. In the *Confessions*, Augustine conducts his philosophical inquiries on time in terms of utterance.[126] He insists on the philosophical priority of sound to the formation of melody and text, reinforcing the temporal precedence of speaking to writing.[127] Reading a text, even divine text, cannot produce the kind of interpretive precision available through listening. If Augustine could hear Moses speaking in Latin, he would understand more definitively than is possible by reading the Scripture Moses wrote.[128] Like Ellul, Augustine attends carefully to linguistics, yet he is not precisely a linguist; he aims the *Confessions* at the hearts of flesh and blood people living real lives constructed by spoken language.[129]

Nevertheless, Augustine's pedagogical sensibilities and hermeneutic inquiries demand that he attend to linguistics. An entire literature has emerged surrounding his prototypical work in semiotics. For example, historians of semiotics John Deely, Tzevetan Todorov, and Umberto Eco all attribute to Augustine semiotic sensibilities that are more than prescient; he surpasses the work of Saussure in philosophical and theoretical sophistication.[130] Eco

explains that, for Augustine, meaning is inferred relationally within the sign on every level, without reference to any external object. Consequently, Augustine problematizes any equivalence theory of linguistic meaning and opts for an inferential model of meaning.[131] Augustine's sign theory constitutes a radical departure from all other classical language and sign theories.[132] He breaks definitively and indisputably from Socratic, Platonic, and Stoic sign theories.[133] *De doctrina christiana* and *De magistro* offer Augustine's most concentrated treatment of signs, but the principles permeate his other texts from *Confessions* and *City of God* to *Narrations on the Psalms*. Ultimately, for Augustine and Ellul, Truth speaks, and people communicating truth do so through speech. Truth and language are correlated in the spoken word and true knowledge abides in face-to-face, personal relations.[134]

The presence of meaning in the spoken word does not make understanding simple. And the genealogical sympathies we attribute to Augustine and Ellul concerning the spoken word do not discount the intellectual viability and impact of structural analyses of texts. Semiotic realities are essential to hermeneutics, exegesis, and criticism—both textual and cultural—making hermeneutic work difficult and textual meaning slippery. Therefore, to order semiotics properly is to recognize text and graphics as dramatically important but ultimately derivative from spoken language. In sum, Ellul and Augustine work from a common ground: the word heard and spoken defines human language. Our next task is to investigate the source of their common claim that ultimate linguistic reality is bound to the spoken word.

Incarnation

The definitive word for both Ellul and Augustine is the Word incarnate. The opening words of the Gospel of John are commonly quoted: "in the beginning was the Word. . . ." From antiquity, these words have been regarded approvingly by philosophers well beyond the scope of orthodox Christianity. However, Augustine notes that philosophers like the Neoplatonists of his own day (and numerous theologians and philosophers in our own) are more reluctant to quote the fourteenth verse of John 1: ". . . and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."[135] Ellul and Augustine stand together in grounding their philosophy of language on the apostle's proclamation as a dynamic, inseparable whole. In the most radical sense, the incarnation announces the essence of speech as the original, personal, and meaningful language.

Speech is the original language. Both Ellul and Augustine understand existence in terms of the uncreated, eternal Word: a single spoken Word

that predicates all else that is spoken into existence. Augustine says, "Therefore, you say once and forever all that you say by the Word, who is coeternal with you," and all that is created is created in this one Word.[136] Ellul adds,

> God creates through his Word. This simple word, which has become a commonplace, first indicates to us that for God creation involves absolutely no effort at all. This is no "difficult" birth. It is not a huge struggle against chaos; it is not laborious work, arduous modeling, or a sculpture that requires supreme effort, as is the case in so many other cosmogonies. No: God speaks. It is the simplest thing possible and the least constrained: God speaks and things come to be.[137]

Speaking Being generates speaking beings, distinguishing identity through differentiation. The initial, most profound distinction is between God's Word spoken and humans speaking words. Ellul explains that parts are given birth from the whole as intrinsically meaningful: "The word bestows being on each reality, attributing truth to it; it gives dynamism to reality and prescribes a fixed trajectory for it. In this way the word disentangles confusion and nonbeing."[138] Differentiation between human persons is real in language, a necessary if secondary implication of the original differentiating function of language. Ultimately, language brings a certain order based on the creative word that marks an easy, essential equivalence of word and action.[139] And, for Ellul, the fact of the incarnation denies any priority in the relation of word to act. The Word made flesh creates an essential unity of speech and act to such an extent that to give action priority over speech is "not a way of taking Christianity more seriously. It is dilettantism."[140]

The Speaking Being is Jesus Christ—Person and Word incarnate. The Word as *imago dei* both mediates for and identifies with human persons in language, which makes symbolization an intrinsic human need. And the mediation of *imago dei* from the incarnation reinforces the importance of human language, because "the Word of God is conveyed by the vehicle of human word."[141] Furthermore, "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" defines language as always already both personal and relational. The incarnate Word locates language in the human life world, inseparable from people and places. The Word—as spoken—is literally irreplaceable: that is, a person's name cannot be diagrammed, pictured, or re-placed in any other graphic way that would make language arbitrary. Ellul characterizes the divinity of the incarnate Word according to theologian Karl Barth's paradox of "act and mystery," which enables Ellul to insist on the ultimate inability of a human being to define adequately God's incarnate Word who

is simultaneously both language and person, "literalness and intellectuality."[142] The incarnation locates spoken language with, in, and between people. "The God who speaks through the Word ('God says . . .') is neither far off nor abstract. Rather, he is the creator by means of something that is primarily a means of relationship."[143] The relationship is dialogic: therefore, there is no insignificant person. Each person—every human life—is meaningful.

The Incarnation—the speaking, acting Word-in-flesh—secures linguistic temporal meaning, truth, and reality for Ellul and Augustine. Ellul points out that although Jesus was literate, he accomplished nothing by writing, only though speech: "the written word remained sterile and ineffectual."[144] Ellul takes this as a sign of the derivative role and status of the written word. For his part, Augustine recognizes that the incarnation perfectly unites word and deed, speech and action, in one person and place; he says he would never have believed just one of the two in isolation.[145] Ellul and Augustine move from close harmony into unison concerning the ontological and the epistemological unity of being and knowledge through the incarnation. Ellul says, "In Jesus Christ word and sight, proclamation and experience, space and time, are united."[146] Augustine says that all things we hear and see are spoken and seen eternally in Word, by Spirit, according to God the Lord.[147]

The incarnation is a proclamation of human significance for both Ellul and Augustine. Spoken word is a manifestation of incarnation—the unity of temporal life and person and language within eternity. Thus significance and truth are inseparable from the person.[148] Truth cannot be found in things seen; truth emerges from belief in a Person by persons. Ellul explains that "faith establishes a relationship of confidence in the person who speaks. The word has significance only if I have confidence in the person speaking to me. The truth of the word depends neither on its objective content nor on its logical coherence but on the person who speaks it."[149]

In his critique of structuralism, Ellul objects to equating speech with text. He makes a robust case for speech as primordial language, grounded in the Word of God incarnate. The incarnational move confounds technique. Ellul's argument also resonates phenomenologically with vernacular sensibilities in language and life. Consequently, meaning, love, and truth cannot be summarily dismissed nor discounted by reduction on simple linguistic grounds. Given speech as primordial language, meaning remains present, expansive, and deeply existential; but it is not merely existential. According to Ellul, belief is required because human being is predicated by God's eternal language. We are permeated by radically present language that

is not of our own making. We do not create Word; Word creates human being and is always already with us. Therefore, we listen first. Yet Word also comes to us. The incarnation, says Ellul, "sums up and guarantees all other events, personal or historical, and renders history and life absolutely irreversible."[150] And, in close concurrence with Augustine, the incarnational event secures the concrete humanity that locates and situates truth and rhetoric together.[151] What matters is not that "eternity has intervened in time" or that "an abstract God has intervened for man." When we speak aright about "the Event," we say that it is in the living man, Jesus, that the living God has incarnated himself.[152]

Revelation precedes reason; we receive and believe the word that comes to us in person. And the word we believe fashions us. We cannot proceed without such understanding, a linguistic act of faith that requires a temporal philosophy of communication that unites the practical arts of hermeneutics and rhetoric. As Ellul says, "A person must believe in language if he is to be open to the meaning of a reasoned argument."[153] We hear a deep resonance in Ellul with Augustine's familiar theme—"if you will not believe, you shall not understand"—which spans the chronological chasm between Augustine and Ellul.[154]

We have considered some of Ellul's major theoretical coordinates—common sense, the spoken word, and the incarnation. Together, these coordinates congeal into a coherent philosophy of communication that emerges from a language-centered understanding of eternal truth and supports a rigorous temporal commitment to rhetorical theory and practice. Our final task is to explain the ancient roots and present dimensions of this philosophy of communication and thereby to address a remaining question: Why does Ellul assert that we must "believe in language" to engage in meaningful rhetoric?

CHRISTIAN ALETHEIA AS A PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNICATION

Both Ellul and Augustine openly embrace rhetoric at multiple levels. Both recommend what renowned historian of rhetoric George A. Kennedy has broadly categorized as philosophical rhetoric.[155] However, their contributions at this level are modest: Ellul calls for rhetorical training but spends no time developing the theme.[156] In *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine says he "must thwart the expectation of those readers who think that I shall give the rules of rhetoric here which I learned and taught in the secular schools."[157]

He does not call the rules erroneous or evil; he commends Cicero's teaching on the integration of wisdom and eloquence for truthful rhetoric.[158] Augustine and Ellul suggest that rhetorical theory and practice can be learned satisfactorily from extant sources.

However, they do not seem to be entirely content with the tradition of philosophical rhetoric. Their prime difficulty is the problem of truth and rhetoric, and, we argue, their prime contributions emerge at a *metarhetorical* level where rhetoric and philosophy of communication meet. James J. Murphy points the field to the problem of metarhetoric with the philosophical question, "How do we know what it is that we need to know in order to be rhetorical?"[159] He defines the inquiry as an examination of "first principles, either stated or left implicit, upon which a rhetorician bases his whole activity."[160] The metarhetorical question is pertinent for Augustine and Ellul as Christian intellectuals because the *functional* status of eternal truth is at stake. To frame the dilemma: Platonic schools can embrace truth and dismiss rhetoric, Gorgian schools can embrace rhetoric and dismiss truth, and schools of civic rhetoric (Aristotle, Isocrates, Cicero, Quintilian, etc.) can assume truth or defer questions of ultimate truth to focus on rhetoric as a practical art. Not so Augustine and Ellul.

They must address the question of truth and rhetoric directly, and they must do so in philosophy and practice simultaneously. The problem is intellectually unmanageable. When Ellul says that truth is neither objective content nor intersubjective coherence he places himself in the midst of what appears to be an intractable dilemma. The repudiation of both the correspondence and the coherence views of truth, "has created a predicament for the notion of truth altogether."[161] Ellul's conundrum is palpable; how can he maintain this position? Augustine finds himself in the same place, having rejected both correspondence and coherence views of truth.[162] The genealogical link between Ellul and Augustine here is crucial. Together, they say that truth depends on the person: specifically, Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God. Ellul proclaims with Augustine this one simple Word that must be believed as the predicate to meaningful rhetorical action. Word, person, and truth are unified in Jesus Christ, the Person who moves Ellul and Augustine to believe in language more broadly. In truth, this one Word makes it possible for a person to *believe in language* and, therefore, to be open to temporal rhetoric in a community of ordinary (not divine) human persons.[163] Their essential belief in language that is grounded in the incarnation functions *metarhetorically* as a rhetoric of truth-revealed-in-person.

Ellul and Augustine stand together on common *metarhetorical* ground from which they become proponents and practitioners of a philosophy of aletheiac rhetoric.[164] As a mode of rhetoric, aletheia is an ancient, philosophically robust view of ultimate truth hospitable to rhetoric. As a form of truth-in-practice, aletheiac rhetoric emerges through a unity of form and content: "true" to a standard—for example, moral rectitude or ethical fidelity. Articulated within a moral framework of faithfulness, we can hear broad resonances of richly textured meaning that finds expression worldwide, in antiquity as well as in our own day. To the Greek *aletheia* (openness, disclosure) we can add Hebrew *emeth* (trustworthy, genuine, dependable, authentic).[165] In Serbo-Croatian the true is justified as with a plumb line in carpentry. In the powerful wheel imagery of the Buddhist tradition, truth is the immovable axle. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa presumes that sufferings from apartheid can be healed through truthful testimony. In Gandhi's *satyagrapha*, the power of truth through the human spirit eventually wins over force.[166] Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Ethics* contends correctly that a truthful account lays hold of the context, motives, and presuppositions involved.[167] Telling the truth depends on the quality of discernment so that penultimates do not gain ultimacy. Truth means, in other words, to strike gold, to get at "the core, the essence, the nub, the heart of the matter."[168] In the Talmud, the liar's punishment is that no one believes him.[169]

Truthfulness is a basic principle because of its capacity to integrate other norms. And as we have just heard, truthfulness, faithfulness, and aletheiac rhetoric are not the exclusive province of Christianity; we could also learn more about aletheiac rhetoric from other traditions. Ellul and Augustine help us understand aletheiac rhetoric as a compelling philosophy of communication rooted in Christian orthodoxy. For example, the Augustinian legacy subverts contemporary discourse that defines truth as mere facticity, a theme we have observed in Ellul's critique of structuralism. Truth as aletheia generates a constructive ambience that links truth with moral principles and resists pragmatic relativism. Within Christian aletheiac rhetoric, the problem of truth becomes an issue of axiology, not epistemology and concerns truthful unveilings of the presence and glory of God *via the Word and Spirit of God*.[170]

Dale Lee Sullivan details key aspects of aletheiac rhetoric by advancing our rhetorical understanding of *kairos*. He aligns kairotic principles with the practices of inspired proclamation in early Christian rhetoric. This alignment accounts for how the Apostle Paul set aside his traditional Greco-Roman eloquence, "placing himself in a situation that required a

special inspiration for success, a success that would manifest itself in power, *dunamis*, the breaking out of God through *logos*."[171] At first glance, aletheiac rhetoric appears enigmatic—committed to eternal truth, but not Plato's; existential, but not doxastic; situated, but not epistemic. Sullivan explains that aletheiac rhetoric is always *located*, emerging temporally in the moment of the rhetorical act through "revelation or unveilment." He concludes that "it produces a belief that seems stronger than tentatively held opinions produced by doxastic or epistemic rhetorics, and it does not depend on consensus as a basis for truth."[172]

In the *Confessions*, Augustine narrates what Sullivan describes. He begins saying, "By believing I could have been healed, so that my mind's clearer sight would be directed in some way to your truth, which endures forever and is lacking in nothing," and continues, "in truth, it could never be healed except by believing."[173] Augustine devotes the entire chapter to the discussion of belief in terms of faith, thought, and life—a narrative treatise on aletheiac rhetoric. Glenn Settle argues that Augustine focuses decisively on "rhetoric as an aletheiac act."[174] In the process, he makes "a major contribution to the philosophy of communication, contradicting the highly secular and linear view of the ancient Greeks."[175] Sullivan explains that aletheiac rhetoric concerns ultimate questions of belief that demand a yes or no and *metanoia*—"a change of mind in which a new vision of life replaces an older one."[176]

Aletheiac inspiration functions in a *suprarational* mode, not according to ordinary human rationality or irrationality.[177] As Sullivan observes, "The auditor . . . confronts a force that does more than address his or her intellect. . . . The process of translating the transcendent into the immanent is thus completed . . . and the result is overpowering."[178] Therefore, aletheiac rhetoric resists dead orthodoxy. Augustine loved to quote 2 Corinthians 3:6: "the letter kills but the spirit quickens [gives life]."[179] Truth is found in the present, spoken word. Only speech can have the "sting of truth" or ring true in aletheiac terms for Ellul.[180] Proclamation is never abstract, never doctrinaire, never *merely* a proposition—aletheiac truth involves the radical presence of the eternal. As Ellul says:

> Because God speaks, when a person speaks a mysterious power is attached to what he says. Every human word is called on, more or less clearly, to express the Word of God, and there is a misuse of power, and abuse of words when this is not the case. Henceforth, human language has an eternal reference from which it cannot escape without destroying itself or without stripping itself of all meaning. The value of the human word depends on the Word of God, from which it receives its decisive and

> ultimate character. This quality is expressed in its critical value and in ethical decision. This is a result of human speech's relationship with the Word of God: of God's taking up this human word, so that there is continuity (as well as discontinuity) between them, and of human speech's finality in relationship with the Word of God. For God's Word, according to the author of the letter to the Hebrews (4:12) is "sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." Thus the Word of God is the critical power par excellence, which of course only God can exercise; only he knows what its result will be.[181]

Settle notes a similar insistence in Augustinian truth, one that "tends to be more relational than propositional, a dialogically interpersonal, sacramentally charitable act rather than a statement."[182]

The aletheiac rhetoric Augustine theorizes is both triadic and personal: eternally present in the society of the Trinity and populated in time by human beings in dynamic rhetorical relationships guided by the cardinal virtues of faith, hope, and love. In *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine grounds the aletheiac relation in the Trinity and then plainly formulates a temporal hermeneutic philosophy of rhetoric upon the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.[183] The structure—books 1–3 on hermeneutics and book 4 on rhetoric and eloquence—becomes clear and coherent when understood as an aletheiac pattern of belief and action. In each human moment the Word is perpetually resounding, eternal truth and love always already present in the incarnate Christ, and the Word is harmoniously driving a teleological spiral of hermeneutics and rhetoric. In this regard, both Augustine and Ellul reinstantiate for their own time the Johannine conception of Christ, that he as Rhetor is the Word himself, the living aletheia (John 14:6) and the expressed logos (John 1:1), the rhetorical union of act and word. In Augustine's terms, Jesus is the revealed "Word of God . . . made flesh without change that He might dwell among us" (1.13.12). Ellul says, "The Word of God is the very person of God incarnate. . . . The incarnate Word is in reality the Word fully given to humankind."[184] He is the prototype of aletheia: the one true person revealed as mediator—the one Word—within the singular reality of eternity and time. As God's Word, he proclaims Truth to the whole world; as God's Word, he listens to the Word of the Father and obeys, rightly interpreting the Word of Truth. Christian rhetoric must live in this intermediate place.

Therefore, the primordial human act is auditory and responsive—we are hermeneutical beings—and believing rhetoric begins with

hermeneutics-as-invention through which charity guides rhetorical practice in word and deed. Augustine practices interpretation as a rhetorical act, directed toward people, not texts; he concerns himself most with the radical contingency of human beings.[185] As James J. O'Donnell notes, caritas is both the goal and "also the only reliable means of interpretation."[186] Ultimately, caritas situates Augustine and Ellul within a Christian aletheia that constitutes a searing critique of autonomous rationality yet gives them hope to resist effectively both skeptical nihilism and optimistic relativism.[187] Arthur Kroker and David Cook observe the resilience of Augustine's conception of truth as reason radiated by love (caritas), a conception that has been impervious to critiques of correspondence theories of truth.[188] Love endures with truth—as the psalmist sings, love and truth kiss one another.[189]

Augustine and Ellul direct aletheiac rhetorical action toward two persons: God, who is to be heard and loved by human beings in faithful response, and one's neighbor, who is to be heard and loved by faithful service in word and deed.[190] Their rhetoric reflects an abiding preoccupation with true and false lives.[191] Rhetoric as caritas, in the sense of neighbor love, must be truthful.[192] As the German thinker Dietmar Mieth puts it, "Love presupposes truth. Love is not truthful if it is instrumental, that is, merely makes use of another person. True love accords full recognition to the person, and his or her story, the past, the present, and the future. Thus every genuine relationship of love contains an inner truthfulness."[193] *The Humiliation of the Word* correlates resistance to la technique with loving one's neighbor.[194] "The most important thing that we can do socially is to rediscover our neighbor," says Ellul again in *The Presence of the Kingdom*.[195] We begin to discern that Ellul develops coordinates and principles of aletheiac rhetoric throughout his corpus, elevating the hearing and doing rightly in relation to God and neighbor according to God's Word.

In his early days as a Christian intellectual, as Ellul tells us, he learned from Augustine that times, institutions, and nations change. But not so the Word. Augustine's twofold rule of charity—love of God and love of neighbor, received from the incarnate Christ—calls Ellul and Augustine into a common, derivative mediating role. Neither is capable of reasoning to eternal truth, although both receive it as reasonable with a good heart. As Ellul notes about gaining awareness of the relationship between spiritual and material realities, "To achieve this awareness as a whole is only possible under the illumination of the Holy Spirit. . . . Whatever work is undertaken by man does not reveal its meaning or its value save in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit."[196] The awareness to which Ellul points is the

meaning of our neighbor, the meaning of the incarnation, and the limits of the holy. "But we have seen that this awareness goes further than the intellectual plane; it issues from the Holy Spirit, to end in the wholehearted 'committal' of our lives to God." In a real sense, Augustine and Ellul speak to the role of every living human person to mediate the eternal Word in temporal communion with others: that is, to hear, listen, interpret, and respond to God's spoken Word and then to proclaim and practice true communication in love by word and deed.[197]

From their shared metarhetorical ground—an aletheiac philosophy of communication—Ellul and Augustine analyze their own eras and critically assess the forms of worldliness and rebellion against God's Word, often advocating and practicing a full spectrum of rhetorical practices. They sound different alarms because the empty words of the late Roman Empire and the empty words of la technique differ markedly. Ellul does not want to recommend simplistic proclamation or "to copy the methods" of earlier revivals, reformations, or revolutions.[198] Such methods could not meet an aletheiac standard because they claim love for God but neglect the neighbor. The standard does not change because the problem is not the Word: "The Word of God is always valid, and if they do not get anything from it today, it is because they are in a false position: it is not the Word which needs to be changed."[199] But practices must change because they are situated in space and time.

The reverse is also a problem: attending to the neighbor without attending to God's Word enacts a temporal ideology and "actually means belonging to the world. . . . They have capitulated to it" and "are simply fostering the Devil's work in the world."[200] Both rules of love must be maintained in aletheiac rhetoric to maintain the "intermediate position" of good Christian action. Viable rhetorical action demands that we proclaim and mediate simultaneously, linking the "present and eschatological."[201] In this sense, aletheiac rhetoric is a mimetic response to Word. "The Bible always shows us God laying hold of man in his practical situation, in the setting of his life, enabling him to act with the means of his own time, in the midst of the problems of his own day."[202] The predictable end of Ellul's version of aletheiac rhetoric is a new Christian "style of life" characterized by faithfulness, truth, and love. To his credit, Ellul argues that no such style of life currently exists, and he worries that the possibility of such a lifestyle, which can only be fashioned in community, has been coopted by modernity.[203]

We suggest that Ellul advances rhetorical training informed by an aletheiac metarhetoric as subversive to la technique. Aletheia, as expressed and

practiced by Ellul and Augustine, temporally reorders and redeems rhetoric but remains fully rhetorical—reasoned, substantial, stylized, and charged with manifest moral motives.[204] Accordingly, they prioritize truthfulness and faithfulness that can only be manifested by humans through words in action: that is, rhetoric. Aletheia is a living truth that fully integrates word and deed. There is no dichotomy. Incarnate words mean truly—human beings inhabit words and are inhabited by words simultaneously.

Conclusion

Ellul and Augustine are genealogically entwined at the point of rhetoric and philosophy of communication. We first saw indicators at the surface of Ellul's text. Upon examination, we heard closer connections at depth, based on shared coordinates within the Christian intellectual tradition—Word and words, Person and persons, Truth and truthfulness, Aletheia and philosophy of communication. The rhetoric they espouse is humble and charitable; other directed and dialogic; proclamational, but not merely propositional. Ellul and Augustine work from a philosophy of language that insists on the inseparability of word and person—being not as a *prior* condition but as a necessary condition for language—the prototype of which is the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Their resulting commitment to the primacy of spoken word—speech and hearing—as definitive of human language is grounded in the eternal Word of God as creative and revelatory, eternal Creator of human beings in space and time. The spoken human word is, therefore, derivative, relational, and intensely existential—dependent on presence and functional only in the present.

Taken together, these philosophical coordinates serve as a catalyst for Ellul and Augustine to theorize an aletheiac metarhetoric not as an alternative to traditional philosophical rhetoric but as a metarhetorical ground for philosophical rhetoric. Aletheia commits Ellul and Augustine to promote the idea that, for human beings, listening to revelation is the first rhetorical act. Through proclamation, the spoken word in action, suprarational revelation establishes grounds for human moral action in word and deed. The words and deeds include acts of interpretation and responsive speech—generative hermeneutical and rhetorical work—that uphold and reinforce temporal epistemic and doxastic rhetorical practices from aletheiac metarhetorical grounds.

The Christian aletheiac rhetoric that emerges in Ellul and Augustine moves between two dynamic axes: first, we engage the person of

God-in-Christ that establishes a vertical axis descending and ascending into temporality from eternity; and second, we engage our neighbor(s) as speaking human person(s) appearing to us along our shared horizontal axis of temporality. The call to love God and neighbor is realized *only* in and through language in action as mediated by the incarnation. Aletheia propels rhetorical theory and practices along a realistic trajectory, a realistic vector that advances Truth along unconventional coordinates, at least according to the standards of modern Western metaphysics. Correspondence to reality is not the definition of truth but of facticity—a measure of accuracy. Propositions alone may be accurate or inaccurate. Thus accuracy of language in reference to reality remains important to science, while intersubjective coherence in form and content remains important both for aesthetics and for reasoning and agreement. But neither correspondence nor intersubjective coherence function in the order of aletheiac truth. Truth is found in faithfulness within language and to persons who speak. Truthfulness is a measure of faithfulness to a standard, to a promise, to a word—constancy, coherence, and conformity to language in practice. Consequently, aletheic metarhetoric *inclines* Augustine and Ellul positively toward philosophical rhetoric, that is, toward argument, deliberation, and practical reasoning in theory and practice. They both advocate and recommend rhetorical training. But hearing, listening, reading, and interpreting rise to greater prominence.

Epilogue

Calvin L. Troup

What makes Augustine a worthy interlocutor for rhetoric and philosophy of communication? The conversations among continental philosophers, Augustine, and present scholars remind us that old books are valuable not because they are old but because they introduce questions not otherwise available into considerations of present issues.[1] These essays suggest remarkable philosophical consultations with Augustine on phenomenology, language, ethics, hermeneutics, and rhetoric. Summarizing Augustine's philosophical usefulness, Karl Jaspers notes Augustine's contributions regarding personal consciousness: his exploration of memory, his work on existential certainty and uncertainty, and his inquiry into temporality, all of which resonate with his hermeneutic studies.[2] Furthermore, we are challenged by Augustine's philosophical inclinations to open, extend, and expand thought and practice.[3]

Considering the problems of modernity, we begin to get a glimpse into why Augustine may serve us so well. To correct an error with a strong hold on popular consciousness demands much. And Augustine is disproportionately committed to practical philosophy; that is, he works rigorously from hermeneutics through rhetoric into practice.[4] Therefore, this epilogue considers basic problems in modernity to which continental philosophy responds, discusses the role of hermeneutic phenomenology and rhetorical hermeneutics together as a constructive philosophical antidote to modernity, and recounts reasons why Augustine is formative for continental philosophers who are pertinent to ongoing work in hermeneutic phenomenology and rhetorical hermeneutics today.[5]

Modernity, as a complex of dominant ideas and practices with which we have been living for several hundred years, is formidable. The continental scholars whose conversations with Augustine we consider in this volume are widely known for tracing the contours of modernity. They have long recognized the philosophical failures of modernity for human life, society, culture, and thought. Each one grapples, in his or her own distinct way, with the philosophical vacancy of the modern age and seeks viable responses. Modernity is the metanarrative of which Jean-François Lyotard speaks in *The Postmodern Condition*, and he famously defines the "postmodern as incredulity toward metanarratives."[6] Reduced to a label, the banal duplication of "metanarrative" in critical literature ultimately reinforces the power of modernity, which careens on by sheer inertia without substantial ethos and without the ultimate philosophical ground it claims, but not without evil consequences.

The historical conditions in which twentieth century continental philosophers worked—including two world wars and a worldwide depression—impressed upon them the evils of modernity. The woes they came to know had been known to people in previous ages, but modernity extended worldwide the degree, efficiency, and force of these woes and the atrocities perpetrated during the twentieth century. Like myriads of people living in Europe at the time, they experienced and witnessed in person unmitigated pain and suffering wrought by the application of modernity's core tenet: a belief in the supremacy of scientific methods and technological solutions. This highlights one of the basic problems of modernity, overextension: a presumption that methods of science and technology should be extended into all corners of existence and as the answers to all human questions. That is, modernity believes that humans can use scientific methods and techniques to "improve" the consciousness, conduct, and culture of other human beings. Daniel J. Boorstin explains, "By reasoning from the technological to the political and the social, we have been seduced into our own kind of mistaken, if prematurely encouraging, conclusions." By way of example, he observes, "It may be within our power to provide a new kind of grain and so cure starvation in some particular place. But it may not be in our power to cure injustice anywhere, even in our own country, much less in distant places."[7] Boorstin suggests limits:

> We must learn, at the same time, to accept John Adams' Law (that political wisdom does not significantly progress, that the problems of society, the problems of justice and government, are not now much more soluble than

> they ever were, and hence the wisdom of the social past is never obsolete) while we also accept Arthur Clarke's Law (that all technological problems are substantially soluble, that "anything that is theoretically possible will be achieved in practice, no matter what the technical difficulties, if it is desired greatly enough," and hence the technological past is always becoming obsolete).[8]

But modernity, which can bear no rivals, rejects John Adams' Law despite the fact that we cannot "solve for" answers to the problems of the human condition, culture, or society by applying the methods of science and technology. The modern system runs on fixed rules and techniques that limit, diminish, and suppress human being, human thought, and human liberty, regardless of their stated intent. Internal criticism—dissent that obeys modern rules, methods, and techniques—is permitted to proceed and may even promote significant political, social, and economic upheaval and realignment. But even modern revolutions are not finally radical; the modern root remains untouched, and the modern system remains intact. Modernity would reduce every alternative to a method.

Twentieth-century continental philosophers sought substantial, irreducible ways to contend with modernity. By impulse and sensibility they resisted the temptation to think that problems in the modern world could be corrected through improved methods. Rather, they rejected the terms of modern thought altogether. Their resistance, like ours, may be incomplete. In addition to our own personal limits, we are each affected by powerful assumptions of our own age, sometimes unmindfully. Regardless of the limits, the basic response of continental philosophy in the twentieth century, including reliance on premodern thinkers like Augustine, continues to be instructive. And so we turn our attention toward phenomenology, to Augustine, and to what we might learn from the relationship between them.

Antidotes to modernity in continental traditions begin with phenomenological inquiry. Within phenomenology, the chief enigma and point of resistance to modernity is the question of human being—we ourselves. And the distinctive feature of humanity through which we experience our lives is language in practice. The presence of language resides at the core of human being, a distinct feature of the human condition that plays a pivotal role in personal consciousness, identity, and the fabric of human social relations. Language is enigmatic and enormous. No one person can hope to comprehend it in its fullness—particularly its ephemeral, meaningful, yet unmanageable potency. Living human language is a vexing problem

for modernity, which cannot tolerate the contingency of speech. Modern impulses applied to human language may develop systems that reduce a message to one correct meaning or systems that prove demonstrably that language is meaningless. Some methods analyze language as a sign system abstracted from human persons, others promote theories of discourse that subsume language and its constitutive character under power relations.[9] Although modern theories and methods claim to address the essence of human language, they are inclined toward systems, structures, methods, and techniques with no person present.[10]

Phenomenology as a school of inquiry eschews method and theory to pursue, instead, human accounts of human being from within the human condition. Phenomenological inquiry proceeds from common assumptions to open human language, texts, and conditions.[11] The impulses of phenomenology are expansive. Enigmatic human realities can be known, but incompletely and imperfectly. By contrast, modernity carries out its work on humanity under false pretenses, believing that method and theory can provide complete and perfect knowledge from an illusory Archimedean point above the common world not available in actuality.[12] To work phenomenologically, however, we encounter, understand, and embrace philosophical presuppositions that ground human action and the activity of human reason in the world; we then attend primarily to the action, not to the ground.

Inquiries into human action in the world place us squarely in the realm of hermeneutics and rhetoric.[13] In our ever-changing temporal moments, we must decide and act in the midst of uncertainty and contingency on the basis of probabilities. As human beings, we decide and act in and through language, but in and through language we find life to be temporal, uncertain, and contingent. To interpret mindfully in the moment is a hermeneutic act; to respond thoughtfully is a rhetorical act. These realities are common to human being. We arrive on the scene in human life with the dynamics that require hermeneutics and rhetoric already under way. However, along life's path, thought and reason can be suppressed in various ways, including coercion and distraction, and one effect of modernity is the suppression of the human impulse to navigate life hermeneutically and rhetorically. A common path of study within this book leads through hermeneutic phenomenology to rhetorical hermeneutics—both of which are communicative practices that people need in order to navigate meaningful lives through the uncertainties, contingencies, and probabilities of the human condition. To provoke our thinking about antidotes to modernity, we have worked to reflect further on

relationships between Augustine and continental philosophy—a significant but underdeveloped intellectual genealogy.

Augustine is not a likely candidate to serve a strong heuristic purpose at first glance. Is he not a patron saint of one of the major metanarratives of the common era? However, many formative twentieth-century continental philosophers, including those discussed in this volume, do not find that Augustine's work advances modern Western metanarratives. When they engage Augustine, they find an interlocutor, a collaborator, and a premodern source working within categories from which to resist modernity. They hear Augustine's aspirations to a unity of wisdom, eloquence, and virtue in action gathered from Cicero and fulfilled through the incarnation of Jesus Christ as aspirations that create openings, not closures. Augustine works within the human arts of hermeneutics and rhetoric as uniting philosophy and action. Hermeneutics and rhetoric resonate deeply with Augustine's Christian commitments to practices of incarnational wisdom: living a unity of faith and works, living in and through a unity of word and deed, and living within a well-ordered unity of faith, hope, and love. Love of God and love of neighbor establish all other orders for Augustine and guide expansive, not reductive, interpretation and action.

Augustine is valuable in part because the impulses and assumptions that propel the disorders we know in modernity are not entirely new. Augustine encounters versions of them in his own era. Rhetoric had been reduced to a formal technique, accompanied by popular skepticism (as opposed to radical intellectual skepticism); Augustine encountered schools of textual interpretation that also moved between the poles of skeptical critique on one hand and "singular canonical interpretation, which is mine" on the other.[14] Such premises and practices were present but not yet prime modes of intellectual and social practice across every human institution as they are in our modern era. Nevertheless, how the continental philosophers in this volume come to such fruitful readings of Augustine remains an important question.

To engage Augustine on questions of hermeneutics and rhetoric demands overcoming the modern scholarly edifice; one must treat scholarship *about* Augustine as secondary and read Augustine's work as primary. His contributions in hermeneutic phenomenology emerge from sources lightly esteemed by modern scholars: orthodox Christian and Greco-Roman traditions.[15] By rejecting Augustine's philosophical grounds and sources of tradition, modern minds close themselves to basic categories that compel Augustine's work decisively toward hermeneutic phenomenology and rhetorical hermeneutics. Not so, however, continental philosophers. We

recall what Albert Camus observes, that Augustine synthesizes Christian and Greco-Roman philosophy without diminishing Christianity and establishes an indestructible union of body and word through the incarnation.[16] With Camus, inquirers from existential phenomenology find Augustine to be a touchstone of resistance and refuge against modernity.[17] However, we may rightly ask, what, besides Augustine's synthesis of premodern sources, makes Augustine useful to continental philosophy and rhetoric when moderns have effectively discounted him? The fact that continentals have engaged Augustine substantially is, by now, obvious. They introduce us to the expansiveness and originality of his thought for our own day. To explain further this continuing premodern-postmodern conversation, I offer a few provisional suggestions.

First, continental philosophers are already practicing hermeneutic phenomenology and rhetorical hermeneutics that are harmonious with Augustine's work; their commitments enable them to open Augustine's texts in new, faithful, and fruitful ways.[18] They bypass modern errors by founding their interactions with Augustine on textual engagement, taking soundings within his texts through which they find him to be an intellectual companion alongside whom they can conduct their own scholarly work. Second, as they engage Augustine, the continentals find that unprecedented phenomenological sensibilities, hermeneutic principles, and rhetorical perspectives permeate his work. Functionally, Augustine's value resides first and foremost in his willingness to work within and trace an expansive hermeneutic circle; he invites phenomenological inquiries and enriches them hermeneutically, not hegemonically. And this is perhaps one of the great surprises of Augustine to the continental philosophers, linking his intrigue and value. Regardless of whether the reader shares Augustine's faith in Christ, Augustine is hermeneutically and rhetorically faithful—opening ideas without hubris and without proprietary claims.[19] His ideas are compelling, yet he maintains regard for persons other than himself, and he regards the limits of others as commensurate with his own. Engaged on these terms, Augustine is seen as confident about the Trinitarian God of the Bible, about Truth, about Eternity, and so on, but is deeply uncertain about himself.

Third, Augustine invites his readers to learn with him and from him, not so much about him. Finding himself problematic, Augustine points elsewhere. The continentals in this volume accept the invitation. To the questions of who we are, how we are, why we are, and how we are to act in the world, Augustine's *Confessions* will constantly seek to revert, advert, divert, subvert, and convert us. Notably, the major questions that propel

the *Confessions* emerge *after* Augustine's conversion; his full engagement and embrace of the incarnate Christ produces and extends Augustine's phenomenological sensibilities. The incarnational ground opens Augustine to grapple with problems that make him a prototypical existential phenomenologist.[20] The incarnation spawns a torrent of questions, not answers. And Augustine invites us into the inquiry without offering reductive answers. He walks fearlessly into the most profound questions of the human condition through aporia and often walks away without a satisfying answer. He finds that the pressing problems of human existence, including personal identity, memory, time, and interpretation, must be addressed but cannot be answered definitively.[21] Hugely important questions in life evade our full comprehension. Nevertheless, we must ask. Though we can reasonably expect to gain some meaningful understanding of our human condition, we must live, decide, and act without ever having complete, definitive knowledge.

While searching the deeper horizons of Western traditions for ideas that contend with modernity, continental philosophers discover Augustine—in his gray robe, not in ornate ecclesiastical vestments. By considering the work of these continental philosophers, we can gain valuable perspectives on a number of scholarly issues and practices. One of the things that we learn is that hermeneutic phenomenology is no recent innovation; neither are phenomenological impulses reactionary. They are grounded historically and philosophically. Another lesson is that the move against modernity through hermeneutic phenomenology and rhetorical hermeneutics demands intellectual humility and generosity. Humility will perpetually acknowledge our limits as human beings. As living persons, we did not cause our own existence and cannot possibly take everything into account. More specifically, human thought and reason rely on crucial grounds that we must receive and believe but that we can neither prove nor fully comprehend. Our very existence, our human consciousness, and our reasoning minds are three such givens.[22]

Necessary premises on which phenomenological inquiry proceeds are central to Augustine's project and are prominently featured in the *Confessions*. These prime philosophical premises are not derived by human metaphysical thought but are rather received in the nexus of an assortment of historical and traditional grounds upon which Augustine must rely but which cannot be proved. The tradition of continental philosophy shares this attitude of receptivity and respect for the historical and traditional givens of existence, seeing in this orientation the only authentic way forward. By

honoring philosophical grounds, we affirm that we are in the world and are conscious and sentient beings, we can attend with perspicuity to how and why we are, and we act in the world. In other words, we are free to engage the enigmatic problems of human existence. The value of these coordinates in resisting modernity can hardly be overstated.

The point of engagement with Augustine is not to advance esoteric studies but to call upon Augustine for aid in consideration of present questions. We can learn how he works to face the phenomenological challenges of his own world in practice. How does he respond? From robust Christian premises, he pursues hermeneutic phenomenology and rhetorical hermeneutics. He rests on the incarnation and explores the potency of phenomenology—from unities of body and soul, time and eternity, consciousness and existence, presence and absence, word and deed, to a robust hermeneutic and rhetorical orientation to the human condition. Augustine is part of the ancestral line of the tradition of hermeneutic phenomenology. He secures its philosophical moorings in practices, times, places, and persons that precede and supersede modernity. He provides historical entry points without demanding disciples. Instead, he helps us understand dimensions and resonances within a Western philosophical tradition that already wholeheartedly resists modernity. When continental philosophers engage Augustine in the twentieth century, his premodern contributions provide contramodern leverage points for postmodern resistance through constructive hermeneutics and rhetoric.

Augustine speaks a word before its time. In many ways, the questions of continental philosophy and existential phenomenology align with questions that compelled Augustine to think and to write theologically, philosophically, historically, and rhetorically in the chaotic moments of the late Roman Empire. We are perhaps now growing into Augustine's central philosophical and rhetorical ideas, almost entirely lost on medieval and modern minds. That these ideas find their ground in the heart of Augustine's Christian faith raises further problems and possibilities for interpretive courage and commitment, possibilities such as the role of charitable love in phenomenology, hermeneutics, and rhetoric. For the moment, we trust that these possibilities have been probed in ways that will hopefully instigate and provoke further inquiry into what makes Augustine a welcome, faithful, and fruitful interlocutor for hermeneutic phenomenology and rhetorical hermeneutics today.

Notes

Preface

1 James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from Saint Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 61.

2 Calvin L. Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom: The Rhetoric of Augustine's Confessions* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), 39.

3 See, e.g., Thomas M. Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition* (New York: Longman, 1990), 72–78.

4 For a summary of this debate, see Colin Starnes, *Augustine's Conversion: A Guide to the Argument of the Confessions I–IX* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1990), 277–89.

5 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 6–7, 32–39.

6 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 116–18.

7 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 1, 6–7.

8 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 35.

9 James J. O'Donnell, *Augustine: Confessions*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992); Starnes, Augustine's Conversion.

10 Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 91–123.

11 W. R. Johnson, "Isocrates Flowering: The Rhetoric of Augustine," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 9, no. 4 (1976): 217, 226.

12 Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 60.

13 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 176–78.

14 James M. Farrell, "The Rhetoric(s) of St. Augustine's *Confessions*," *Augustinian Studies* 39, no. 2 (2008), 265–91; Dave Tell, "Beyond Mnemotechnics:

Confession and Memory in Augustine," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 39, no. 3 (2006): 233–53; Dave Tell, "Augustine and the 'Chair of Lies': Rhetoric in The *Confessions*," *Rhetorica* 28, no. 4 (2010): 384–407.

15 John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon, eds., *Augustine and Postmodernism: Confessions and Circumfession*, Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion, ed. Merold Westphal (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

16 The Vandals who besieged Hippo in 429 were a Germanic tribe engaged in an expedition of aggression, and they occupied Roman North Africa for approximately ten years.

Chapter 1: Troup

1 See Richard Leo Enos and Roger Thompson, eds., *The Rhetoric of St. Augustine of Hippo: "De doctrina christiana" & the Search for a Distinctly Christian Rhetoric* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2008).

2 Kenneth Burke, *The Rhetoric of Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 48, 164, 228.

3 Umberto Eco, *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 150–52; see also Luigi Alici, "Sign and Language," in *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, ed. John E. Rotelle, part 1, vol. 11: *Teaching Christianity, "De doctrina christiana,"* intro., trans., and notes by Edmund Hill (New York: New City Press, 1996), 50n72.

4 The Enos and Thompson volume corroborates the tradition, as indicated by the focus of the anthologized essays with a newly published translation of *On Christian Doctrine*, book 4.

5 Michael J. Hyde and Craig R. Smith, "Hermeneutics and Rhetoric: A Seen but Unobserved Relationship," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 65, no. 4 (1979): 347–48.

6 Hyde and Smith, "Hermeneutics and Rhetoric," 356.

7 Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, trans. J. N. Findlay (New York: Routledge, 2001), 1:168. Originally published in 1900.

8 Calvin O. Schrag, "The Structure of Moral Experience: A Phenomenological and Existential Analysis," *Ethics* 73, no. 4 (1963): 256; emphasis added.

9 Schrag, "Structure of Moral Experience," 256.

10 Hyde and Smith, "Hermeneutics and Rhetoric," 353 (also see 353n26).

11 Augustine, prologue to *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. D. W. Robertson Jr. (New York: Macmillan, 1958).

12 Augustine, prologue to *On Christian Doctrine*, 2.xii–xl.

13 Augustine, prologue to *On Christian Doctrine*, 2.xxiv–xxviii.

14 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 2.28.44.

15 Augustine, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, trans. John K. Ryan (New York:

Image, 1960), 8.5.10–12; 8.7.16–18. All citations of the *Confessions* in this chapter refer to the Ryan translation.

16 Calvin L. Troup, "Rhetorical Interpretation in Augustine's *Confessions*," *Journal of Communication and Religion* 24, no. 1 (2001): 45–46.

17 Troup, "Rhetorical Interpretation in Augustine's Confessions," 256.

18 Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 1:29.

19 Augustine, *Confessions*, 2.33.

20 Martin Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 128. Heidegger is quoting Augustine, *Confessions*, 2.33.

21 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 154. Heidegger here refers to the phenomenological commonplace that one cannot both be in the experience (of pleasure in this case) and reflect on the experience simultaneously. The "care" precludes the pleasure.

22 Heidegger insists on the same posture toward Augustine in *Being and Time*. For example, see Heidegger's use of Augustine in discussion of the phenomenal proximity of *Dasein*. Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 68.

23 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 154–55.

24 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 154–55.

25 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 155.

26 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 171.

27 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 197.

28 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 181.

29 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 198.

30 Hannah Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, ed. Joanna Vecchiarelli Scott and Judith Chelius Stark (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 24–25.

31 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 57.

32 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 80.

33 Albert Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, trans. Ronald D. Srigley (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007), 129–30.

34 Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, 127.

35 Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, 126.

36 Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*.

37 Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, 133.

38 Jean-François Lyotard, *The Confession of Augustine*, trans. Richard Beardsworth (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2000), 1.

39 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 19, 55.

40 Jacques Derrida, "Circumfession," in *Jacques Derrida*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 82–88.

41 Caputo and Scanlon, *Augustine and Postmodernism*, 50, 100, 104, 121, 122, 146, 168, 174.
42 Derrida, "Circumfession," 25.
43 Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.20.25, 10.30.38.
44 Caputo and Scanlon, *Augustine and Postmodernism*, 9; Derrida, "Circumfession," 25.
45 Caputo and Scanlon, *Augustine and Postmodernism*, 3.
46 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Continuum, 1994), 16.
47 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 15.
48 Edmund Husserl, *The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness*, ed. Martin Heidegger, trans. James S. Churchill (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964), 21.
49 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:29.
50 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:5–6.
51 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:7.
52 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:6.
53 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:7.
54 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 1.
55 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:29.
56 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:30.
57 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 4.
58 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 6.
59 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 1, 5–7.
60 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 5–9.
61 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 205.
62 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 24.
63 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 6–7.
64 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 25.
65 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*.
66 Augustine, *Confessions*, 7.18–21.
67 Albert Camus, *Carnets 1942–1951* (London: H. Hamilton, 1963), 92.
68 Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, 118.
69 Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, 126.
70 Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, 128.
71 Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, 130.
72 Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, 130–33.
73 Augustine, *Confessions*, 7.9.20–21.
74 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:5.
75 Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.4, 6.
76 Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.43.69.

Chapter 2: Hyde

1 Heidegger's most extensive treatment of Augustine is found in his *Phenomenology of Religious Life*. This text is based on his 1920–1921 lectures on religion at the University of Freiburg. These lectures are considered to be the "high point" of his studies in the phenomenology of religion.

2 Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," trans. Frank A. Capuzzi in collaboration with J. Glenn Gray, in *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 210.

3 Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 10.16.25. All citations of the *Confessions* in this chapter refer to the Chadwick translation.

4 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Edward Robinson and John MacQuarrie (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 163–68. Citations in this chapter refer to this edition. See particularly where Heidegger writes about the "they-self."

5 According to Margaret R. Miles, Augustine "was the first Christian author to begin his thinking and writing with an analysis of human experience. In place of beginning, as the pre-Socratic philosophers did, with speculation about the physical world, or as Plato did with a cosmological scheme, or yet with Aristotle's question about behavior of people and things, Augustine began examining the human condition, in particular his own human condition—the texture, the subjective color of the fabric of his life." See her "The Body and Human Values in Augustine of Hippo," in *Grace, Politics, and Desire: Essays on Augustine*, ed. Hugo A. Meynell (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1990), 55.

6 Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," 230.

7 Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," 237.

8 For an extensive treatment of Augustine's influence on Heidegger, see Theodore Kisiel, *The Genesis of Heidegger's "Being and Time"* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 191–217; also see Philippe Capelle, "Heidegger: Reader of Augustine," in Caputo and Scanlon, *Augustine and Postmodernism*, 115–26.

9 Heschel, *God in Search of Man*.

10 Augustine, *Confessions*, 1.1.1

11 Paul Davies, *God and the New Physics* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 70, 209.

12 Richard Feynman, *The Meaning of It All: Thoughts of a Citizen-Scientist* (Reading, Mass.: Perseus Books, 1998), 49–50.

13 Martin Rees, *Before the Beginning: Our Universe and Others* (Reading, Mass.: Perseus Books, 1997), 246.

14 Calvin O. Schrag, *God as Otherwise Than Being: Toward a Semantics of the Gift* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2002), 117–18.

15 See, e.g., Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982).

16 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 58.

17 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 256–73.

18 Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," 237.

19 Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 122–24.

20 Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, 155; Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 56.

21 Martin Heidegger, *Basic Concepts*, trans. Gary E. Aylesworth (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 55.

22 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 256–73.

23 Augustine, *Confessions*, 2.10.18.

24 Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.6.9.

25 Augustine, *Confessions*, 1.6.10.

26 Crispin Sartwell points to one of the fundamental ways this ontological dialectic shows itself in everyday existence when he writes, "Perfectly ordered systems are boring and perfectly chaotic systems are merely bewildering. . . . We love unity and rationality, yearn for it. But we also focus obsessively on the possibility of a release from it." *Six Names of Beauty* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 99, 105.

27 This is not to say, however, that in being authentic, we are necessarily involved in creating what others would consider right and just. Being responsive and responsible can lead to major controversies, as was the case when Heidegger *chose* to associate himself in 1933 with the movement of National Socialism. The literature on this particular controversy is immense. For an excellent collection of essays that attend to the matter, see Gunther Neske and Emil Kettering, eds., *Martin Heidegger and National Socialism: Questions and Answers* (New York: Paragon House, 1990).

28 Augustine, *Confessions*, 6.6.9.

29 Augustine, *Confessions*, 8.5.10.

30 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 232, 317–35.

31 Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.18.39.

32 Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.29.40.

33 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 317–21.

34 Martin Heidegger, "Holderlin and the Essence of Poetry," in *Existence and Being*, trans. Douglas Scott, R. F. C. Hull, and Alan Crick (South Bend, Ind.: Henry Regnery, 1949), 275.

35 Kenneth Burke, *Permanence and Change* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), 37.

36 The points being emphasized here are typically associated with Aristotle's

Rhetoric. The literature on this classic text is quite extensive. For two excellent works on the topic that offer a sense of the history of this literature, see Thomas B. Farrell, *The Norms of Rhetorical Culture* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993); and Eugene Garver, *Aristotle's Rhetoric: An Art of Character* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). Heidegger touches on all of the points mentioned here in his *Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie: Marburger Vorlesung Sommersemester 1924*. Abteilung 2, Vorlesungen 1919–1944, Band 18. *Gesamtausgabe*. Edited by Mark Michalski. Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 2002. See Daniel M. Gross and Ansgar Kemmann, eds., *Heidegger and Rhetoric* (Albany: State University of New York, 2005).

37 Heidegger, *Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, 23.6.24; Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tubingen: Niemeyer, 1979), 138–39. Robinson and Macquarrie translate "in der rechten Weise" as "aright" (*Being and Time*, 178). As indicated above, however, a less condensed translation is possible: "in a right and just manner." The German *recht* can bespeak the moral sense being emphasized here (as when, for example, one says "es ist nicht recht von dir": "it's wrong or unfair of you"). Moreover, if one is to credit Heidegger's gloss of the *Rhetoric* in *Being and Time* as being right, just, and fair, then my suggested translation should be seen as appropriate since, for Aristotle, rhetoric certainly has a moral role to play in the workings of the polis. (Importantly, at this point in the essay, an anonymous reviewer admitted that he or she thought, "It is strikingly odd that such a philosophy would come from Heidegger, with his Nazi sympathies." The issue is often raised in the controversy (see note 27) over *the philosopher* Heidegger's *political* leanings. I make much of the matter in Michael J. Hyde, "A Matter of the Heart: Epideictic Rhetoric and Heidegger's Call of Conscience," in Gross and Kemmann, *Heidegger and Rhetoric*, 81–104.

38 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 226–27. One could, of course, insist that factical existence presupposes the workings of God, but even then one would still need to provide a rigorous phenomenology of human existence to clarify the actual nature of these workings. Heidegger makes the point this way: " 'Vita' (life) is no mere word, no formal concept, but a structural complex which Augustine himself saw—without, however, yet achieving sufficient conceptual clarity" (226).

39 For an expanded and especially lucid discussion of this point, see Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*. Also see the essays in Enos and Thompson, *Rhetoric of St. Augustine of Hippo*; and Christine Mason Sutherland, "Love as Rhetorical Principle: The Relationship between Content and Style in the Rhetoric of St. Augustine," in Meynell, *Grace, Politics, and Desire*, 139–54.

40 Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.29.40.

41 Augustine, *Confessions*, 3.4.7.

42 Cicero, *De officiis*, trans. Walter Miller (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1913), 1.7.22.
43 Cicero, *Orator*, trans. H. M. Hubbell (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 3.12.
44 Cicero, *De officiis*, 1.6.29.
45 Augustine, *Confessions*, 3.4.7–8.
46 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 4.3.5.
47 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 4.2.3.
48 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 4.10.24.
49 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 4.11.26.
50 Heidegger, *Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, 4.7.24, 5.6.24, 6.6.24.
51 See Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, for a discussion of this particular (mis)reading of Augustine.
52 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 165.
53 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 219–24.
54 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 167; emphasis added.
55 Heidegger, *Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, 19.6.24.
56 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 436.
57 Augustine, *Confessions*, 12.31.42.
58 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.3.5.
59 Augustine, *Confessions*, 12.30.41.
60 See Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 117–78.
61 Martin Heidegger, "*Der Spiegel* Interview with Martin Heidegger," in *Martin Heidegger and National Socialism: Questions and Answers*, ed. Gunther Neske and Emil Kettering, trans. Lisa Harries (New York: Paragon House, 1990), 57. The interview was conducted May 31, 1976.

Chapter 3: Arnett

1 Jürgen Habermas, *Philosophical-Political Profiles* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971/1981); Seyla Benhabib, Roy T. Tsao, and Peter Verovsek, *Politics in Dark Times: Encounters with Hannah Arendt* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and Seyla Benhabib, *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000); Judith Butler, *Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).
2 Hannah Arendt, *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of a Jewess* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 237.
3 Ronald C. Arnett, "Existential Homelessness: A Contemporary Case for Dialogue," in *The Reach of Dialogue: Confirmation, Voice and Community*, ed. Rob Anderson, Kenneth Cissna, and Ronald C. Arnett (Cresskill, N.J.: Hampton

Press, 1994); Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (New York: Penguin Books, 1961).

4 Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Books, 1963); and Ronald C. Arnett, "The Bureaucrat as Problematic Other: Arendt's Warning," in *Problematic Relationships in the Workplace*, ed. Becky Omdahl and Janie M. Harden Fritz (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 2:145–62.

5 Ronald C. Arnett, Janie M. Harden Fritz, and Leeanne M. Bell, *Communication Ethics Literacy: Dialogue and Difference* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2009), 17.

6 Ronald C. Arnett, *Communication Ethics in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt's Rhetoric of Warning and Hope* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2012).

7 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 57.

8 Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981).

9 David Chidester, *Christianity: A Global History* (New York: HarperCollins, 2000).

10 Karl Jaspers, *Plato and Augustine*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1962); and *Augustin* (Munich: Piper, 1976).

11 Karl Jaspers, *The Origin and Goal of History* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973); *Philosophy Is for Everyman: A Short Course in Philosophical Thinking*, trans. R. F. C. Hull and Grete Wels (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1967); and *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy*, trans. Ralph Mannheim (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1968).

12 Jaspers, *Plato and Augustine*, 70–71, 207.

13 Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*.

14 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 2008). Originally published as *Sein und Zeit* (1962).

15 Rudolf Bultmann, *New Testament and Mythology and Other Basic Writings*, ed. and trans. S. M. Ogden (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1984).

16 Karl Jaspers, *Reason and* Existenz*: Five Lectures*, trans. William Earle (Milwaukee, Wis.: Marquette University Press, 1997); *Philosophy of Existence*, trans. Richard F. Grabau (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971); *Existentialism and Humanism: Three Essays*, ed. Hanns E. Fischer, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: R. F. Moore, 1952).

17 Günther Anders, *Die Antiquierheit des Menschen* [The Outdatedness of Human Beings] (Munich: Beck, 1956).

18 Bernd Widdig, *Culture and Inflation in Weimar Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

19 Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitler's World View: A Blueprint for Power*, trans. Herbert

Arnold (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981). Originally published in 1969.

20 Gustav Stresemann negotiated a treaty with France and Britain, the Locarno (Switzerland) Pact, on October 16, 1925. Also in 1926 Stresemann framed the Treaty of Berlin—working out peace with Russia, and the Pact of Locarno—declaring peace among Germany, France, Belgium, Great Britain, and Italy. Stresemann also paved the way for Germany's invitation into the League of Nations. For this extraordinary work in peace and negotiation, Stresemann and the French foreign minister, Aristide Briand, received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1926. The calls for peace could not, however, stem the economic downward spiral in Germany. Germany's economy collapsed in 1927, followed by the beginning of the worldwide Great Depression of 1929. Sadly, Stresemann died of a stroke in 1929 with German power shifting toward Nazi interests. By 1929 Mussolini was in power in Italy and framed the Lateran Treaty creating Vatican City. The Lateran Treaty, effective from 1929 to 1985, was an agreement between Italy and the Vatican signed by Benito Mussolini and Pietro Gasparri. This treaty called for mutual recognition of the sovereignty of Vatican City with full independence for the pope.

21 Rome's collapse was marked by the fall of the western empire, which lasted from A.D. 395 to 476. Augustine (354–430) authored his two most important works, *Confessions* and *City of God*, during the western collapse of Rome. *Confessions* was written in 397, just after the beginning of the fall of the western empire, and *City of God*, written from 413 to 426/427, was a response to critics who blamed Christianity for the Roman collapse.

22 Voltaire, *Candide; Or, Optimism*, trans. Burton Raffel (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2005). Originally published in 1759.

23 Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, 101.

24 Ronald C. Arnett, "Embeddedness/Embedded Identity," in *Encyclopedia of Identity*, ed. Ronald L. Jackson (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2010), 241.

25 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 57.

26 Ray Hart, *Unfinished Man and the Imagination: Toward an Ontology and a Rhetoric of Revelation* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1968).

27 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1975).

28 Ronald L. Jackson, ed. *Encyclopedia of Identity* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2010). In Jackson's work, there are more than 322 essays from the humanities and social science disciplines and 652,000 words devoted to the question of identity.

29 Burke, *Permanence and Change*; and Eric Voegelin, *Order and History* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 124.

30 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 24–25.

31 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 27.

32 Burke, *Permanence and Change*; Voegelin, *Order and History*.
33 For an explication of the notion of the "derivative I," see Ronald C. Arnett, "The Responsive 'I': Levinas' Derivative Argument," *Argumentation and Advocacy* 40 (2003): 39–50.
34 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 17.
35 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 17.
36 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 28.
37 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 28.
38 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 28.
39 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 29.
40 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 29.
41 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 33.
42 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 17.
43 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 43.
44 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. T. K. Abbott (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus, 1996), originally published in 1788; Emmanuel Levinas, "Freedom and Command," in *Collected Philosophical Works*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1953), 15–24.
45 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 48.
46 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 4.
47 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 50.
48 Ronald C. Arnett, "Beyond Dialogue: Levinas and Otherwise Than the I-Thou," *Language and Dialogue* 3 (2012): 140–55.
49 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 287.
50 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 84.
51 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 89.
52 Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre Nous: Thinking-of-the-Other*, trans. Michael B. Smith and Barbara Harshav (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998). Originally published in 1991.
53 Hannah Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*, ed. Ronald Beiner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). Originally published in 1977.
54 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 101.
55 Ronald C. Arnett, Janie M. Harden Fritz, and Annette Holba, "The Rhetorical Turn to Otherness: Otherwise Than Humanism." *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy* 3, no. 1 (2007): 123.
56 Arnett, *Communication Ethics in Dark Times.*
57 Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1972); Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Duquesne University Press, 1969). Originally published in 1961; Buber, *Between Man and Man.*
58 Burke, *Permanence and Change*; Voegelin, *Order and History*; Martin Buber, *On*

Intersubjectivity and Cultural Creativity, ed. S. N. Eisenstadt (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

59 Ronald C. Arnett, "A Dialogic Ethic: 'Between' Buber and Levinas," in *Dialogue: Theorizing Difference in Communication Studies*, ed. Rob Anderson, Leslie Baxter, and Kenneth Cissna (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2004).

60 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 7.

61 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 5.

62 Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 2000). Originally published in 1983.

63 Geertz, *Local Knowledge*, 57.

64 Buber, *Between Man and Man.*

65 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 3.

66 Christine Daigle, *Existentialist Thinkers and Ethics* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006), 4.

67 Albert Camus, *The Stranger*, trans. Stuart Gilbert (New York: Random House, 1946), 154. Originally published as *L'étranger* in 1942.

68 Camus, *Stranger*, 154.

69 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Heidegger's Ways*, trans. John W. Stanley (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), xxii.

70 Arendt, *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of a Jewess* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 237.

71 Arendt, *Rahel Varnhagen*, 15.

72 Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986); Buber, *Between Man and Man*; Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Duquesne University Press, 1986).

73 Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise Than Being; Or, Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Duquesne University Press, 1998). Originally published in 1981. Also, Levinas, "Freedom and Command"; and Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*.

74 Buber, *Between Man and Man.*

75 B. F. Skinner, *Walden Two* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1948), 271.

Chapter 4: Depew

1 Jean-François Lyotard, *La confession d'Augustin* (Paris: Editions Galilee, 1998). In English, Lyotard, *Confession of St. Augustine*. All references are to pages numbers in this translation.

2 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 28, 56. Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.23, 29. Because of its admirable vivacity I quote (with exceptions as noted) from Garry Wills' English translation of Augustine's *Confessions* (New York:

Penguin, 2002). Readers of this translation should be warned that its numbered paragraphs do not correspond to the standard divisions of the Latin text. I refer to passages by using the standard divisions, in which the first number stands for the book and the second for chapters or sections of books.

3 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.29.

4 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 33.

5 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 24.

6 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 24. This argument goes to the heart of Augustine's objection to Pelagius and to the Pelagian-style liberal theology whose ascendance in modern Europe is coeval with the birth of secular humanism. Pelagius affirms that we can indeed predict, implement, and forestall our own actions and passions—and that God will reward us for it. Lyotard's analysis shows why Augustine rules out this possibility on psychological-phenomenological, and not just theological, grounds.

7 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 29.

8 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 31.

9 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.28.

10 Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.28.

11 Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.29.

12 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.11.

13 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.13.

14 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 73.

15 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 17.

16 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 17.

17 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 55.

18 Aristotle, *Physics* IV.11.219.b1; 220a21-25; b16-17; 221b7.

19 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.23.

20 Immanuel Kant tried to exorcise these skeptical suspicions by arguing that unless our mind were running more or less in accord with physical time, our experience would not be coherent enough to be described even in the jumbled ways Virginia Woolf, for example, describes it. Kant also argued that the coherence of time-consciousness shows it to be a unitary intuition, not, as Aristotle thought, an inductive generalization.

21 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 19.

22 Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893–1917)*, trans. J. B. Brough (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1990). First published in 1928.

23 Husserl, *Internal Time*; Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.27–28.

24 Proust's great *roman fleuve* suggests, paradoxically, that time past can be made present to consciousness only in remembrance.

25 In 1921 Heidegger gave a course on Augustine and Neoplatonism in which

he claimed that “Augustine abandons the facticity of life and sacrifices it to metaphysics.” See Capelle, “Heidegger: Reader of Augustine,” 121.

26 Martin Heidegger, *The Concept of Time*, trans. William MacNeill (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 15. Written in 1924; originally published in 1989.

27 Martin Heidegger, *The Question concerning Technology*, trans. W. Lovitt (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1977). Written in 1949; originally published in 1954; *Early Greek Thinking*, trans. D. Krell & F. Capuzzi (San Francisco: Harper, 1975).

28 On this theme, see Lee Braver, *A Thing of This World* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2007).

29 Jean-François Lyotard, *The Differend*, trans. Georges Van Den Abeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 72. Originally published as *Le differend* (Paris: Les Edition de Minuit, 1983). Lyotard references Aristotle, *Categories* 4a10-20 and *Sophistical Refutations* 165b38–166a6.

30 Lyotard, *Differend*, 74. Lyotard’s argument is based on a close reading of Aristotle, Physics IV.11.219a29–220a21.

31 Lyotard, *Differend*, 73.

32 The argument appears in Augustine’s postconversion dialogue *On Free Will* (*De libero arbitrio*). This work preceded *Confessions* by about a decade.

33 René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy,* trans. and ed. Elizabeth Anscombe and Peter Thomas Geach, *Descartes Philosophical Writings* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1971), *Meditation* 2, 67.

34 Lyotard, *Differend*, 77.

35 The analysis of time consciousness in *Being and Time* reached its definitive formulation only after Heidegger began to move in neo-Augustinian, Kierkegaardian circles when in the early 1920s he left Freiburg for Protestant Marburg. What had begun in Freiburg as an account of the categories of average, everyday practice as read off of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, *Ethics*, and *Physics* was profoundly modified by the affective structure of authentic experience and existence that Heidegger began to draw from Luther, Kierkegaard, and his Marburg colleague Rudolf Bultmann. See especially Daniel Gross and Ansgar Kemmann, eds., *Heidegger and Rhetoric* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002). See also Capelle, “Heidegger: Reader of Augustine.”

36 Lyotard, *Differend*, 75.

37 In this respect, Derrida can be compared to modernist painters and other artists who think that art misfires when artists fail to recognize that the media in which they work—paint, sound, words, and so forth—are actually the subject of art, or at least of art that is not implicated in the political consequences of deception. Derrida’s habit of drawing attention in his own writings to writing in its most material dimensions is of a piece with this aesthetic.

38 Derrida, “Circumfession.”

39 Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.26. Traditional translation.
40 Lyotard, *Differend*, 75.
41 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 28.
42 Augustine, *Confessions* 1.1. Traditional translation.
43 Lyotard is famous for claiming that we can no longer entertain "meta-narratives." Jean-François Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne: Rapport sur le savoir* (Paris: Minuit, 1979). This stricture rules out cognitively based predictive claims of the sort found in Marxism, positivism, and other nineteenth-century forms of scientism. It does not, however, rule out voluntaristic hopes for unpredictable transformative Events that will usher in the Revolution. This change illustrates how Heideggerian themes were taken up by disillusioned French socialists after consolidation of the Fifth Republic. I happen to think that the consolidation of the Fifth Republic was a good thing.
44 At the end of each chapter in my Latin text of *Confessions*, published by a German Catholic press in 1926, is a little list of points for meditation. Each such list is called a "*usus*." Interestingly, the great philosophical fugue on time and theology in Books 11–13 is omitted entirely from this edition.
45 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 75.
46 Brian Stock, *Augustine the Reader: Meditation, Self-knowledge and the Ethics of Interpretation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996). Augustine often refers to writing in *Confessions*. The most famous reference is to his astonishment at discovering that Ambrose reads silently (Augustine, *Confessions* 6.3; Stock, 54, points out that Augustine takes this practice as a sign that switching consciousness from outer to inner makes it possible to distinguish spiritual from literal meaning in what one is reading). The most touching reference to writing is Augustine's failure to remember how many scrolls his book on *The Beautiful and the Fit* had been published in. "You remember," he says to God. "I don't" (Augustine, *Confessions*, 4.13). He was confident that God had read his CV.
47 John Durham Peters, *Speaking Into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).
48 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 91.
49 Lyotard, *Confession of Augustine*, 92.
50 I have in mind in particular Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundations of Universalism*, trans. R. Brassier (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003).
51 The case of Derrida is more complicated.
52 See Hent de Vries, "Instances: Temporal Modes from Augustine to Derrida and Lyotard," in Caputo and Scanlon, *Augustine and Postmodernism*, 68–94.
53 Peters, *Speaking into the Air*, 51–59. I am grateful to Peters for illuminating discussions on this subject. I am also grateful to anonymous readers of an earlier

version of this essay for guidance about how to revise it. It was the first, and I am sure the last, time in my life I have been asked to make a manuscript longer.

Chapter 5: Ramsey

1 I hare my gratitude with those students who participated in the Camus/Augustine seminar in the summer semester of 2008 and with my wonderful teaching assistant, Lisa Watrous. The thoughts here owe their origin to the insights and participation of these students whose own work in the class showed they have taken to heart the task of thinking philosophy as a way of life and the question of how to pose and respond with care to questions of the self and our relations with one another. Also, I am thankful for the reading and insights offered by Calvin O. Schrag.

2 Two books central to my understanding of the continental philosophy of religion and the postsecular remain Schrag, *God as Otherwise than Being*; and John D. Caputo, *On Religion* (London: Routledge, 2001).

3 I shall consider these and so many other similarities on the literary and historical relations between Augustine and Camus evident in the existing research and scholarship as more or less sufficiently covered by years of scholarship, and therefore I shall turn my attention to thinking about adding to existing philosophies of communication by way of the encounter.

4 David Sprintzen, *Camus: A Critical Examination* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 8.

5 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974), 95.

6 Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, 95.

7 Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, 95.

8 For a detailed account of this issue today see Linda Weiner and Ramsey Eric Ramsey, *Leaving Us to Wonder: An Essay on the Questions Science Can't Ask* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005).

9 Gianni Vattimo, *Belief*, trans. Luca D'Isanto and David Webb (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999), 41.

10 Vattimo, *Belief*, 41; emphasis added.

11 Vattimo, *Belief*, 47.

12 Vattimo, *Belief*, 47.

13 Gianni Vattimo, "The Age of Interpretation," in *The Future of Religion*, ed. Richard Rorty and Gianni Vattimo (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 47.

14 Vattimo, "Age of Interpretation," 47.

15 Gianni Vattimo, *After Christianity*, trans. Luca D'Isanto (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 5.

16 Albert Camus as quoted in Joseph McBride, *Albert Camus: Philosopher and Littérateur* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 143.

17 I shall not rehearse the whole of the case, here, as it is not my focus; it is handled with great care by Spintzen; see note 4 above.

18 I learned of the phrase "the God called God" from Grace M. Jantzen, who in turn seems to have learned it from Melissa Raphael in the latter's *Theology of Embodiment: The Post-Patriarchal Reconstruction of Female Sexuality* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996); see Jantzen "'Barely by a Breath . . .': Irigaray on Rethinking Religion," in *The Religious*, ed. John Caputo (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2002), 225–40.

19 Albert Camus, "The Artist and His Time," in *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death*, trans. Justin O'Brien (New York: Knopf, 1961), 182, 183.

20 Albert Camus, *The Rebel*, trans. Anthony Bower (New York: Knopf, 1957), 304.

21 Camus, *Rebel*, 21.

22 Camus, "Artist and His Time," 185.

23 Camus, "Artist and His Time," 185.

24 Augustine, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, trans. Gary Willis (Gainesville, Fla.: Bridge-Logos, 2003), 173. All citations of the *Confessions* in this chapter refer to the Willis translation.

25 Augustine, *Confessions*, 173.

26 Augustine, *Confessions*, 212.

27 Vattimo, "Age of Interpretation," 52.

28 Albert Camus, "The Unbeliever and Christians," in *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death*, 55.

29 Vattimo, *Belief*, 90.

30 Camus, "Unbeliever and Christians," 55.

Chapter 6: Arthos

1 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *The Relevance of the Beautiful*, trans. Nicholas Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 5.

2 Gadamer, *Relevance of the Beautiful*, 5.

3 Hans-Georg Gadamer, ed., *Philosophisches Lesebuch* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Bücherei, 1967), 1–4. This work was plainly an extension of the survey course that was a staple of his university teaching. The short prefaces were too incidental to have been published in the *Gesammelte Werke* or translated.

4 Gadamer, *Philosophisches Lesebuch*, 273–75.

5 Paul Ricoeur glosses the distentio animi in a brilliant reading of Augustine's *Confessions*: "Augustine's inestimable discovery is, by reducing the extension of time to the distention of the soul, to have tied this distention to the

slippage that never ceases to find its way into the heart of the threefold present—between the present of the future, the present of the past, and the present of the present. In this way he sees discordance emerge again and again out of the very concordance of the intentions of expectation, attention and memory." Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:21–22.

6 Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. William Watts (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1912). All citations of the *Confessions* in this chapter refer to the Watts translation. In referencing books 9–13, I will give the original book and chapter number and then the edition page number. This quotation, for example, is at 11.18.248; 11.15.242; 11.23.262.

7 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.23.262.

8 Augustine, *Confessions*, 15.26.268.

9 Augustine, *Confessions*, 15.27.278.

10 Augustine, *Confessions*, 15.27.274–79, 275. This is, in fact, an explication of the working hermeneutic circle, and it attaches the theme of temporality as distentio animi with the hermeneutic conception of the word. There is a beautiful use of the stanzas of a poem to illustrate the relativity of time measurement at 11.26.266–68.

11 For the development of the theological concept of the inner word from Augustine to Aquinas, see John Arthos, *The Inner Word in Gadamer's Hermeneutics* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press, 2009), 98–134.

12 The terminology becomes even more confusing when what I have just called immanent and economic is referred to by other theologians as, respectively, transcendent and immanent.

13 Athanasius, *St. Athanasius's Four Orations against the Arians, and His Oration against the Gentiles*, trans. Samuel Parker, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1713). The quote occurs in the first oration, section 8, page 14.

14 Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)*, vol. 1 of *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 191.

15 Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill (Brooklyn, N.Y.: New City Press, 1991), 408. Gadamer calls this reversion the forgetfulness of the West, referring to the fact that at one time we had this richer understanding of language: "there is, however, an idea that is not Greek which does more justice to the being of language, and so prevented the forgetfulness of language in Western thought from being complete." Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, 418. All citations in this chapter refer to this translation.

16 Augustine, *Trinity*, 409.

17 Augustine, *Trinity*, 415.

18 Augustine, *Trinity*, 405.

19 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1990), 478.

20 The "Gnostic presumption" here refers to the various dualistic beliefs that circulated during the formative period of Christian doctrine about the relation of the Son of God to the Godhead.

21 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *The Gadamer Reader*, ed. and trans. Richard E. Palmer (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 417–18.

22 See William Shakespeare's Sonnet 64.

23 Augustine, *Trinity*, 376.

24 I leave this element for last because it is not exclusively Augustine's innovation but rather an achievement of the church fathers as a whole.

25 Joel Weinsheimer makes the following comment about the word *Darstellung* in Gadamer: "In the new translation of *Truth and Method*, this term is rendered as 'presentation,' since the old translation—'representation'—seemed misleading, if not flat-out wrong." *Darstellung*, for Gadamer, was "not something a subject does to an object, but rather a participation in it." Joel Weinsheimer, "Suppose Theory Is Dead," *Philosophy and Literature* 16, no. 2 (1992): 256.

26 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 141; Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, 146.

27 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 142.

28 Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, 148.

29 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 143.

30 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 140; Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, 145.

31 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 142; Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, 147.

32 Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, 149.

Chapter 7: Mickūnas

1 Eugen Fink, *Zur ontologischen Fruehgeschichte von Raum, Zeit, Bewegung* (Den Haag: M Nijhoff, 1957).

2 Augustine, *Confessions*, 4.10.15, in *Les confessions (Livres I–VII)*, vol. 13 of *Bibliothèque Augustinienne*, ed. M. Dulaey and J.-M. Salamito (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1998), 434. All citations of the *Confessions* in this chapter refer to this edition.

3 Augustine, *De immortalitate animae*, 8.13, in *Dialogues philosophiques II*, vol. 5 of *Bibliothèque Augustinienne*, 194.

4 Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, 3, 6, 8–18, 23 in *Dialogues philosophiques III*, vol. 6 of *Bibliothèque Augustinienne*.

5 Augustine, *De liberto arbitrio*, 3, 7, 21, 362.

6 Augustine, *De uera religion* 11, 21, in *La foi chrétienne*, vol. 8 of *Bibliothèque Augustinienne*, 52.

7 Augustine, *Confessions*, 196.
8 Augustine, *Confessions*, 197.
9 Augustine, *Confessions*, 197.
10 Greta Austin, "St. Augustine and the Hall of Memory," *American Scholar* 81, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 70–77.
11 James J. O'Donnell, *Augustine* (Boston: Twayne, 1985).
12 Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart* (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966).
13 Ludwig Landgrebe, *Der Weg der Phaenomenologie* (Guetersloh: Guetersloher Verlagshaus, 1963), 200.
14 Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart*, 81.
15 Landgrebe, *Der Weg der Phaenomenologie*, 20.
16 Ludwig Landgrebe, *Faktizitaet und individuation: Studien zu den Grundlagen der Phaenomenologie* (Hamburg: Felix Meier Verlag, 1982), 111.
17 Gerhard Brand, *Welt Ich und Zeit* (Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955), 66.
18 Ludwig Landgrebe, *Phaenomenologie und Geschichte* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliches Buchgesellschaft, 1968).
19 Brand, *Welt Ich und Zeit*, 65.
20 Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart*,105.
21 Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart*, 4, 12.
22 Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart*, 76.

Chapter 8: Ritivoi

1 Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 3, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).
2 François Dosse, *Paul Ricoeur: Les sens d'une vie* (Paris: La Decouverte, 1997), 48.
3 Paul Ricoeur, "Structure, Event, Word," trans. Robert Sweeney, in *The Conflict of Interpretations*, ed. Don Ihde (Evanston, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 84.
4 Ricoeur, "Structure, Event, Word," 83.
5 Paul J. Hopper, "Times of the Sign: On Temporality in Recent Linguistics," *Time and Society* 1, no. 2 (1992): 223–38.
6 Hopper, "Times of the Sign."
7 Thomas Pavel, "Narrative Tectonics," *Poetics Today* 11, no. 2 (1990): 350.
8 Pavel, "Narrative Tectonics," 351.
9 M. B. Pranger, "Time and Narrative in Augustine's *Confessions*," *Journal of Religion* 81, no. 3 (2001): 382.
10 J. Hillis Miller, "Time in Literature," *Daedalus* 132 (2003): 87.
11 Miller, "Time in Literature," 90.
12 Miller, "Time in Literature."

13 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:86.
14 Ricoeur, "Structure, Word, Event," 85.
15 David Carr, "Review of Paul Ricoeur's *Temps et Recit: Tome 1*," *History and Theory* 23, no. 3 (1984): 357.
16 Carr, "Review of Ricoeur's *Temps et Recit*," 362.
17 Carr, "Review of Ricoeur's *Temps et Recit*," 362.
18 Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick. All citations of the *Confessions* in this chapter refer to the Chadwick translation.
19 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.14.17.
20 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:3.
21 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:3.
22 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:4.
23 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:7.
24 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 3:12.
25 William C. Dowling, *Ricoeur on Time and Narrative: An Introduction* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press, 2011), 20.
26 Dowling, *Ricoeur on Time and Narrative*, 10.
27 Dowling, *Ricoeur on Time and Narrative*, 11.
28 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.20.26.
29 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.27.36.
30 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:19.
31 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:20.
32 Richard Kearney, "Time, Evil, and Narrative: Ricoeur on Augustine," in Caputo and Scanlon, *Augustine and Postmodernism*, 146.
33 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:60.
34 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.28.38.
35 Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 141.
36 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:51.
37 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:52.
38 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:53.
39 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:55.
40 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:39.
41 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:60.
42 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:40.
43 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:6.
44 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:6.
45 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:84.
46 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:169.
47 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:63.
48 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:54.

49 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:22–23.
50 Kearney, "Ricoeur on Augustine," 148.
51 Kearney, "Ricoeur on Augustine," 26.
52 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:26.
53 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:27.
54 Kearney, "Ricoeur on Augustine," 148.
55 Kearney, "Ricoeur on Augustine," 149.
56 Gary Wills, "Radical Creativity," *Modern Language Notes* 89, no. 6 (1974): 1021.
57 Ricoeur's extension of his theory of narrative into a theory of selfhood is fully developed in his *Oneself as Another*. To present this extension is beyond the scope of this essay, but I have pursued it in detail elsewhere. See Andreea Deciu Ritivoi, *Yesterday's Self: Nostalgia and the Immigrant Identity* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002).
58 Paul Ricoeur, *Living Up to Death*, trans. David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 13.
59 Ricoeur, *Living Up to Death*, 13.
60 Paul Ricoeur, "Narrative Time," in *On Narrative*, ed. W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 165.
61 Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:78.

Chapter 9: Troup and Christians

1 Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, trans. John Wilkinson, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), xxv. We will refer to "la technique" throughout either using its French form or, in English, by capitalization—"Technique." Other uses refer to Ellul's generic uses of the term—technique, techniques, etc.
2 Ellul, *Technological Society*, 99; Jacques Ellul, *The Humiliation of the Word*, trans. Joyce Main Hanks (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 148.
3 Ellul, *The Humiliation of the Word*, 149.
4 Ellul, *The Humiliation of the Word*, 2–3.
5 Ellul, *The Humiliation of the Word*, 216.
6 Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Bluff*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 12, 76, 412.
7 Paul A. Soukup, "Ritual and Movement as Communication Media," *Journal of Communication and Religion* 11, no. 2 (1988): 9–17; Calvin L. Troup, "Include the Iconoclast: The Voice of Jacques Ellul in Contemporary Theory and Criticism," *Journal of Communication and Religion* 21, no. 1 (1998): 22–46.
8 Lana F. Rakow, "Gendered Technology, Gendered Practice," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 5, no. 1 (1988): 58; Pat Arneson and Ronald C. Arnett,

"The Praxis of Narrative Assessment: Communication Competence in an Information Age," *Journal of the Association for Communication Administration* 27, no. 1(1998): 50; David J. Sholle, "Critical Studies: From the Theory of Ideology to Power/Knowledge," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 5, no. 1 (1988): 33; Margaret E. Duffy, "Thoughts on Public Relations Education: Can Propaganda Be Good for You? Reply to Debra A. Worley," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 17, no. 3 (2000): 380.

9 Keith V. Erickson, "Presidential Spectacles: Political Illusionism and the Rhetoric of Travel," *Communication Monographs* 65, no. 2 (1998): 143–44; Keith V. Erickson, "Presidential Rhetoric's Visual Turn: Performance Fragments and the Politics of Illusionism," *Communication Monographs* 67, no. 2 (2000): 141; Oscar H. Gandy Jr. and Charles E. Simmons, "Technology, Privacy, and the Democratic Process," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 3, no. 2 (1986): 156; Randall L. Bytwerk, "The Failure of the Propaganda of the German Democratic Republic," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 85, no. 4 (1999): 400–416.

10 Bill Jenkins, "Walker Percy and Jacques Ellul: Technique and the Humiliated Word," *University of Dayton Review* 22, no. 2 (1993–1994): 90.

11 E.g., see Clifford G. Christians and Jay Hook, *Jacques Ellul: Interpretive Essays* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981); Erickson, "Presidential Spectacles," 143–44. Erickson correlates themes in Ellul and the work of Bruce Gronbeck. See Bruce E. Gronbeck, Thomas J. Farrel, and Paul A. Soukup, *Media, Consciousness, and Culture: Explorations of Walter Ong's Thought* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1991).

12 J. Michael Sproule, "The New Managerial Rhetoric and the Old Criticism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 74, no. 4 (1988): 468–86.

13 The use of the "the incarnation" in the essay necessarily follows its usage in Augustine and Ellul. The Christian intellectual genealogy proceeding from Augustine through Ellul is grounded in the incarnation, which they understood as the most radical element of Christian orthodoxy. From this ground emerges a philosophy of language that intersects with significant schools of thought in rhetorical theory and philosophy of communication. In other words, Augustine and Ellul agree vitally on the incarnation. They propose incarnation as the formative, creative, and redemptive Word-and-act in human history, *both* historical and metaphorical. The incarnation is literal in the vernacular sense—an empirical, historical, temporal event-in-fact—but not merely literal in the philosophical sense. At the deepest level of reality the incarnation is *spoken* into temporality and still *speaks* from all eternity: the God-breathed Word. Therefore, the incarnation simultaneously unites history and metaphor (history-in-metaphor; metaphor-in-history).

As a patristic father and doctor of the church, Augustine contributed to the essential creedal doctrine of the incarnation as the union of Eternal Word and temporal word-and-deed in flesh. He maintains what theologians refer to as the "hypostatic union" of God and man in the person of Jesus Christ. From the first century in the early church, Christian orthodoxy rejected as heretical all teachings that considered Jesus Christ as either divine without true humanity or human without true divinity. In modernity, such alternatives to creedal Christian orthodoxy have flourished, seeking the "historical Jesus" (treating the divinity of Christ as a construct of the early church) or reducing the incarnation (not to mention the resurrection) to sacred metaphor, denying any historical reality.

Ellul comes to the incarnation well into the modern era. He establishes his view of all language as mediation and of language as essentially metaphorical in *The Humiliation of the Word* (see pp. 19, 25). Ellul also resonates deeply with Paul Ricoeur, a major philosopher working on theories of metaphor. He echoes Ricoeur in explicating the nature of language and action as paradoxical *and* historical (see pp. 69–70). The incarnation is prototypical for Ellul in this regard: the incarnation is the singular union of truth and reality, of metaphor and fact (see pp. 79–80). Within this context, he insists on the bodily resurrection—the ultimate instantiation of incarnation—in both its historical and metaphorical senses. The incarnation is "the Event." See Jacques Ellul, *The Presence of the Kingdom* (New York: Seabury Press, 1967), 107–8.

Therefore, Augustine and Ellul stand together in their commitment to the premodern creedal communion in which the incarnation—as both historical and metaphorical—continues to define Christian orthodoxy.

14 Jenkins, "Walker Percy and Jacques Ellul," 90

15 Jacques Ellul, *In Season and Out of Season: An Introduction to the Thought of Jacques Ellul*, trans. Lani K. Niles, 1st U.S. ed. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982), 185–86; Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick, 3.7.13. All citations of *Confessions* in this chapter refer to the Chadwick translation.

16 Ellul, *In Season and Out of Season*, 186.

17 Ellul cites Augustine five times at crucial moments through the text.

18 Jacques Ellul, *The Ethics of Freedom* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 188, 199.

19 Jacques Ellul, *What I Believe* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 29, 167–68.

20 Jacques Ellul, *The Theological Foundation of Law* (New York: Seabury Press, 1969), 85–86.

21 Augustine, *City of God*, ed. and abridged by Vernon J. Bourke, trans. Gerald G. Walsh (Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books, 1958), 19.6.

22 Jacques Ellul, *The Political Illusion* (New York: Knopf, 1967), 76; Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 140.

23 Jacques Ellul, *Hope in a Time of Abandonment* (New York: Seabury Press, 1973), 27.
24 Jacques Ellul, *The Politics of God and the Politics of Man* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 194.
25 Jacques Ellul, *The False Presence of the Kingdom* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 84.
26 See, e.g., Ellul, *Technological Society*, 32; Augustine, *Confessions*, 12.18.
27 Jacques Ellul, *The Subversion of Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 22–23.
28 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 109, Ellul, *False Presence of the Kingdom*, 182.
29 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 32–40.
30 Ellul, *Technological Society*, 34, 37, 52.
31 Ellul, *Technological Society*, 34–53.
32 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 14.
33 Ellul, *What I Believe*, 212.
34 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 95–97.
35 Katherine Temple, "Jacques Ellul: A Consistent Distinction," *Media Development* 35, no. 2 (1988).
36 Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 108–20.
37 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 4.10.24–25.
38 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 4.3.4.
39 W. R. Johnson, "Isocrates Flowering," 54.
40 We reflect here on Augustine and Ellul's respective uses of "common sense." Our purpose in the essay is not to evaluate their use of "common sense" within the ongoing critical conversation, which is voluminous. "Common sense" is a contested term within rhetorical and literary criticism. Contemporary critical literature on the topic is copious. Terry Eagleton offers a helpful summary of ideological critiques aimed at common sense based on structuralist/poststructuralist linguistic assumptions in *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 108–9. However, as James Aune argues, an understanding of the rhetorical tradition complicates common sense as understood within rhetorical theory and practice, indicating that rhetorical perspectives and philosophical debates on the term from antiquity (Isocrates, Cicero, Quintilian, Augustine) to the Renaissance (Vico) and particularly during the Enlightenment (Hume, Reid, Locke, Newman) suggest common sense as a productive heuristic, "a needed corrective to Marxism's tendency to view the common sense of a culture merely as a rationalization of that culture's relations of domination." James Arnt Aune, "Cultures of Discourse: Marxism and Rhetorical Theory," *Contemporary Rhetorical Theory: A Reader*, ed. John Louis Lucaites, Celeste Michelle Condit, and Sally Caudill (New York: Guilford, 1999), 549.

41 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 17–20.
42 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 263. Ellul attributes the following to Ricoeur: "Jesus speaks everyone's language: the clearest, most everyday language. His everyday, commonplace language encounters his stories—the extravagance of his parables—and thus an extraordinary element springs forth and explodes with new meaning."
43 Ellul, *What I Believe*, 218; Augustine, *Confessions*, 6.5.7–8.
44 Ellul, *What I Believe*, 172.
45 Ellul, *What I Believe*, 1–2.
46 Ellul, *What I Believe*, 25.
47 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 94–95.
48 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 24–26.
49 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 105.
50 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 115.
51 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 99.
52 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 98–99.
53 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 19.
54 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 20.
55 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 173.
56 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 230.
57 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word.*, 231.
58 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 178.
59 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 173.
60 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 105.
61 Augustine, *Confessions*, 1.6–8.
62 Augustine, *City of God*, 19.17.
63 Augustine, *City of God*, 19.27.
64 Augustine, *Confessions*, 6.5.8.
65 Augustine, *City of God*, 1.35, 11.1, 15.22, 18.49, 18.54, 19.26, 20.5.
66 Gerald A. Press, "*Doctrina* in Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 17 (1984): 98–120.
67 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 2.31–37.
68 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 1.27–28, 2.25–27, 4.10.24; Augustine, *Confessions*, 3.7–8; Augustine, *City of God*, 19.19.
69 C. S. Lewis, *Studies in Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 150.
70 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.20.26.
71 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.22.28.
72 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 4.24.
73 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 4.25.
74 Robert Dodaro, "Eloquent Lies, Just Wars and the Politics of Persuasion:

Reading Augustine's *City of God* in a 'Postmodern' World," *Augustinian Studies* 25 (1994): 82; Johnson, "Isocrates Flowering," 219–20.

75 Augustine, *City of God*, 19.7.

76 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.3.5.

77 J. Wesley Baker, "Ellul on the Need for Symbols," *Ellul Studies Forum*, no. 9 (July 1992), http://ellul.org/ELLUL%20FORUM%20ARTICLES/EF_09_Jul92.pdf.

78 Jacques Ellul, "Symbolic Function, Technology and Society," *Journal of Social and Biological Structures* 3, no. 1 (1978): 209.

79 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 112–54.

80 Baker, "Ellul on the Need for Symbols," 5.

81 Ellul, *What I Believe*, 101.

82 Ellul, *What I Believe*, 102.

83 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 9.

84 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 16, 173, 268.

85 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 44, 153, 156–57n2, 172.

86 Troup, "Include the Iconoclast," 38–42.

87 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 165.

88 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 69, 263. Ricoeur develops his careful distinction between the act of speaking as essential to meaningful discourse versus the limitations of structural linguistics and semiotics in *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1976). Notably, his work also resonates with work by C. S. Peirce on "thirdness" in semiotics and with Mikhail Bakhtin's assumptions concerning "utterance" versus "abstract linguistics." See, for instance, C. S. Peirce, *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorn and Paul Weiss (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931), 1:346–72; and Bakhtin, *Speech Genres* , 107–18.

89 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 170–71.

90 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 46.

91 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 46.

92 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 47.

93 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 170.

94 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 153.

95 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 160.

96 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 46.

97 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 107.

98 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 170.

99 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 170.

100 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 93.

101 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 100.

102 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 99.
103 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 158, 171.
104 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 159.
105 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 140.
106 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 171.
107 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 99–100.
108 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 267.
109 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 73.
110 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 266–67.
111 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 100.
112 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 177.
113 Troup, "Include the Iconoclast," 27; Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 1.
114 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 4.
115 Walter J. Ong, *Orality & Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Metheun, 1982).
116 Ong, *Orality & Literacy*, 3.
117 Ong, *Orality & Literacy*, 14.
118 Ong, *Orality & Literacy*, 14, 37–38.
119 Ong, *Orality & Literacy*, 38–39.
120 Ong, *Orality & Literacy*, 44–45.
121 Ong, *Orality & Literacy*, 111.
122 Augustine, *Confessions* 11.15.18–20, 11.26.33.
123 Ellul, *The Presence of the Kingdom*, 138.
124 Augustine, prologue to *On Christian Doctrine*, 5; Augustine, *Confessions*, 1.8.13.
125 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 2.4.5, 2.3.4.
126 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.27.36.
127 Augustine, *Confessions*, 12.29.40, 12.32.43.
128 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.3.5, 12.16–18.
129 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 176.
130 John Deely, *Introducing Semiotic: Its History and Doctrine* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 17; Tzvetan Todorov, *Theories of the Symbol*, trans. D. Swabey and J. Mullen (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977), 1–19, 35, 41–42; Eco, *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, 33ff. See also Louis G. Kelly, "Saint Augustine and Saussurean Linguistics," *Augustinian Studies* 6 (1975): 54.
131 Eco, *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, 34, 39–42.
132 Todorov, *Theories of the Symbol*, 1–19; Eco, *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, 33.
133 Kelly, "Augustine and Saussurean Linguistics," 52–54, 63; Eugene Vance, "Saint Augustine: Language as Temporality," in *Mimesis: From Mirror to*

Method, Augustine to Descartes, ed. John D. Lyons and Stephen G. Nichols (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1982), 25; Giovanni Manetti, *Theories of the Sign*, trans. Christine Richardson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 159.

134 Augustine, *Confessions*, 12.15.18, 11.27.36.

135 Augustine, *Confessions*, 7.9.14.

136 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.7.9, 13.29.44.

137 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 53–54.

138 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 53.

139 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 54.

140 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 51.

141 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 107.

142 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 51.

143 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 50–51.

144 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 56.

145 Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.4.6. See also 7.18.19, 10.43.69, 11.8.10.

146 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 269. This is a summary of an earlier passage (pp. 79–80) in which he says, "The Incarnation is the only moment in world history when truth joins reality, when it completely penetrates reality and therefore changes it at its root. . . . At this moment the Word can be seen. Sight can be believed (because in the Incarnation, but there only, sight is related to truth). The image, which normally does not have the force of truth, becomes true when the image is Jesus Christ, who is the image of the living God."

147 Augustine, *Confessions*, 13.29.44.

148 Augustine, *Confessions*, 5.3.5.

149 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 80.

150 Ellul, *Presence of the Word*, 130.

151 Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.7–11.9.

152 Ellul, *Presence of the Word*, 131.

153 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 215.

154 Augustine, *Confessions*, 6.5.7; and *On Christian Doctrine*, 2.12.17.

155 George A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric in Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 14–15, 53ff.

156 Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 216.

157 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 4.2–3.

158 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 4.5.

159 James J. Murphy, "The Metarhetorics of Plato, Augustine, and McLuhan: A Pointing Essay," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 4, no. 4 (1971): 201.

160 Murphy, "Metarhetorics," 202.

161 Clifford G. Christians, "Social Dialogue and Media Ethics," *Ethical Perspectives* 7, nos. 2–3 (2000): 182.
162 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 112–15.
163 Openness is a theme of *The Humiliation of the Word*. See pp. 260–69.
164 Christians, "Social Dialogue," 183; Glenn Settle, "Faith, Hope and Charity: Rhetoric as Aletheiac Act in *On Christian Doctrine*," *Journal of Communication and Religion* 17, no. 2 (1994): 49.
165 C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: HarperCollins, 1974), 104.
166 Vernon Jensen, "Bridging the Millenia: Truth and Trust in Human Communication," Paper presented at the Sixth National Communication Ethics Conference, Gull Lake, Mich., 2000, 6.
167 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics* (London: Macmillan, 1955), ch. 5.
168 Wesley Pippert, *An Ethics of News: A Reporter's Search for Truth* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1989), 11.
169 Christians, "Social Dialogue," 182–83.
170 Dale L. Sullivan, "*Kairos* and the Rhetoric of Belief," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 78 (1992): 326–27.
171 Sullivan, "*Kairos* and the Rhetoric of Belief," 317, 323–27, 326.
172 Sullivan, "*Kairos* and the Rhetoric of Belief," 328–29.
173 Augustine, *Confessions*, 6.4.6.
174 Settle, "Faith, Hope, and Charity," 49.
175 Christians, "Social Dialogue," 183.
176 Christians, "Social Dialogue," 327–28.
177 Christians, "Social Dialogue," 327; Settle, "Faith, Hope, and Charity," 49.
178 Christians, "Social Dialogue," 327.
179 Augustine, *Confessions*, 6.4.6.
180 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 45.
181 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 65.
182 Settle, "Faith, Hope, and Charity," 57.
183 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 1.10–17, 1.34.
184 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 51.
185 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 177.
186 O'Donnell, *Augustine*, 25.
187 Concerning the latter, we have in mind the cheerful pragmatism of Richard Rorty, for example.
188 Arthur Kroker and David Cook, *The Postmodern Scene: Excremental Culture and Hyper-Aesthetics* (Montreal: New World Perspectives, 1986), 37.
189 Psalm 85:9-11.
190 Settle, "Faith, Hope, and Charity," 56.
191 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 177; Troup, "Include the Iconoclast," 42.

192 "It is not enough to seek to move men's minds, merely for the sake of power; instead, the power to move is to be used to lead men to truth." From Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 62.
193 Dietmar Mieth, "The Basic Norm of Truthfulness: Its Ethical Justification and Universality," in *Communication Ethics and Universal Values*, ed. C. Christians and M. Traber (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1997), 102.
194 Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 261–62.
195 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 126.
196 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 123.
197 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 125.
198 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 140.
199 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 143.
200 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 144.
201 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 144.
202 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 140.
203 Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 145, 149.
204 Sutherland, "Love as Rhetorical Principle," 152.

Epilogue: Troup

1 C. S. Lewis, "On the Reading of Old Books," in *God in the Dock* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 200–201.
2 Jaspers, *Plato and Augustine*, 70–77.
3 Jaspers, *Plato and Augustine*, 70–77.
4 Jaspers, *Plato and Augustine*, 103–4.
5 For more on the relationship among hermeneutics, rhetoric, and existential phenomenology, see Hyde and Smith, "Hermeneutics and Rhetoric," 347–48; and Schrag, "Structure of Moral Experience," 256.
6 Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), xxiii–xxiv. Notably, Lyotard prefaces this definition by noting that he is "simplifying to the extreme."
7 Daniel J. Boorstin, "Two Kinds of Revolutions," in *The Daniel J. Boorstin Reader*, ed. Ruth F. Boorstin (New York: Modern Library, 1995), 869–70.
8 Boorstin, "Two Kinds of Revolutions," 869–70.
9 For entry points into the critique of structuralism, see Ricoeur, "Structure, Event, Word," 84; and Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 165. For a discussion of how power relations produce discourses of truth, see Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 93–94. In *Discipline & Punish* he further explains, "We should admit rather that power produces knowledge . . . that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power

relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations." Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage, 1995), 27.

10 See Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, 9, 16, 173, 268.

11 For more on this movement from within the human condition, see Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, 143; Schrag, "Structure of Moral Experience," 256.

12 See Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 248–68.

13 Hyde and Smith, "Hermeneutics and Rhetoric," 347–48.

14 Troup, *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom*, 14–15; Troup, "Rhetorical Interpretation in Augustine's *Confessions*," 52–53.

15 Jaspers does not escape the prejudices of modernity on this count. He treats Augustine with great ambivalence on questions of faith and reason. See, for example, his sections on "Revelation and the Church" and "Superstition" in *Plato and Augustine*, 80–81.

16 Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, 126–27.

17 Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, 133.

18 For a thorough discussion of rhetorical hermeneutics as manifested in literary criticism, see Steven Mailloux's *Rhetorical Power* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989), 3–14.

19 The one who does make proprietary claims to interpretation "arrogates completely to himself that which you [God] propose for the enjoyment of all men, and desires that to be his own which belongs to all men, is driven from what is common to all men to what is really his own, that is, from truth to a lie." Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. John K. Ryan, 12.25.34.

20 Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, 57.

21 See Tell, "Beyond Mnemotechnics," 233–53, for a discussion of Augustine's problematizing and ultimate "indictment" of the classical trope of memory as a storehouse, just one of the ways Augustine shows himself unafraid to interrogate given intellectual foundations from his postconversion position.

22 Schrag, "Structure of Moral Experience," 256.

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